

CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES



BOOK 2

DESTINY *for* DISCIPLES

A NEW LOOK AT THE BOOK OF REVELATION



PIETY

Deeper discernment
of the Word



FAITH

Knowing the
Word



LOVE

Doing the
Word



HOPE

God's path
for you



GLORIFICATION

The path
you choose



BY

WILLIAM E. VINSON, JR., PhD



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**CLASSROOM IN A BOOK
DISCIPLESHIP SERIES**

Book 2

**DESTINY FOR DISCIPLES:
A New Look at the Book of Revelation**

by:

William E. Vinson, Jr.

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Preface

THE CLASSROOM IN A BOOK

DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

The *Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series* is a unique approach to education. The author has twenty-five years of experience in classroom teaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Internet teaching. The teachings covered Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Church History, Hermeneutics, Christian Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Evangelism, and Biblical Backgrounds. In other words, the teacher was a generalist in the world of specialization.

During recent years of teaching, God sent two people into the classrooms that have made this series possible. One student brought in some audio recording gear into the seminary classrooms and recorded everything said by teacher and students. The other person, Helen Agnew, transcribed the tapes into weekly sessions. Finally, Helen put all the weeks together for a course into a book, which became the nucleus for a formal book. Next came the editing phases in which the improper English and sentence construction was corrected. Also, the organization and thought flow was improved in order to facilitate a reader's comprehension.

Each class session became a chapter that went through several iterations of the editing process. Also, Helen provided computer drawings of the theological charts and models used by the teacher. These models were inserted into the book at the appropriate places.

INFORMAL WRITING STYLE

You should be aware that the chosen style of communication in this series of books is much more informal than the typical. I have worked to retain the folksy way of expression

that I use in the classroom and pulpits. These books are going to be easy reading because they will be what you hear in everyday conversation.

Dear saint, you are in for a treat. There will be points of time in which your mind will be so absorbed into thinking new and analytical thoughts of our Most Wonderful Lord, that you will be unable to resist sharing them with a loved one. In my editing passes of the various drafts, I found myself reliving the classrooms and all the high emotion and drama. My pulse rate would quicken and convictions and tears would return.

CLASS PROCESS

Each book is a semester-long class. The subject matter is explored very thoroughly because all the students are participating in the questioning and answering. You will have the next best thing to being in the classroom. In fact, there will be times in your reading in which you will be in the classroom through imagination.

BENEFITS

Discipleship has been declared by many to be the greatest need in Southern Baptist life today. In my many years of teaching, I have had churches to bus in many of their members to take my classes at Southwestern Seminary. The reason that was given, was that it was a very good source for discipleship training. This discipleship training is a step up from Sunday School and other training because *it involves seminary training at the lay level*. Armed with this new discipleship training, the new lay ministers are fulfilling their calls and impacting the Kingdom of God in a very positive way. Pastors are benefiting by having

some new lay ministers to help them minister. Churches and society are benefiting by receiving positive help that is theologically sound and practical.

For you, the busy Christian of today, this series is a rare opportunity to actually participate in a seminary classroom to learn from the teacher and your peers in high impact and focused studies that are not available in any other books. The teacher's experience of teaching as a generalist will provide *interconnected insights and truths* that are not available in specialization. The *student interactions* in these books will create a *relevancy* that is unheard of outside the classroom. The quality of the *class dynamics* will lift you, the reader, up into unparalleled densely packed teachings that will greatly improve the *efficiency of your learning*. You

owe it to yourself to jump into this series because you can get an education that is the next best thing to actually going to seminary.

In addition to the student interactions recorded in each chapter, the major points that I made which would be the source of the tests given to the classroom students are stated in the text, and the *test questions* are stated at the end of each chapter (class session). The *answers* to those tests are given at the end of the book for you to check yourself. If you seriously want to know that you have accomplished the goals of each chapter and to be able to teach a course like this, answer those questions to the point that you can do so without going back into the chapter itself—i.e. memorize those points and charts.

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Introduction

I want you to know that my observations are general in nature. I am not singling you, your family, your church, your country, your theology, or your anything out for critique. I am pointing out general problems. Now, if the Holy Spirit uses my observations to prick your soul, that issue is between you and God. My job is to put forth God's Word as clearly as I can. My observations and subsequent analyses are my own opinions. Certainly, I can be wrong in my conclusions, but I do not think that I am. You have every right to discard anything that I say. However, it is my sincere hope that you prayerfully consider my statements and become a real disciple, not of me, but of our wonderful Lord Jesus Christ.

The disciple of Jesus Christ needs to know something of the Church's destiny. The book of Revelation provides a guide map for the disciple. There are some hard times coming. How do we prepare for them? The Lord gave us a preparation manual so that we will not crash and burn in the critical end times.

There is a significant problem though in studying the book of Revelation. That problem is that it is intended only for the Lord's slaves (true disciples of Jesus Christ). Unlike current understanding, a Christian is not necessarily a disciple, or a slave. Certainly, every Christian has been purchased, but the chains to the Christian's heart are not made of iron. They are made of love. Jesus says repeatedly in the book of John that whoever loves Him will obey Him (John 14:15, 21, 23). In reverse, He says that the one who does not obey Him does not love Him (John 14:24). I must then conclude that a great portion of the Lord's Church is in rebellion.

Instead of obeying the "do not's" and the "do's," which comprise the Lord's commandments, the average Christian is climbing the

ladder of success. We want nice houses, good jobs, good educations, wonderful toys, great vacations, lots of money, fancy cars, the adulterations of our acquaintances, power, children to go to the best schools and achieve all of the American dream. We devote ourselves to obtaining these things.

Well what about our religion? We know that the local church is an obligation for us. So, we attend it regularly and give sizable contributions to it. By doing this, we think that God is pleased and swooning over our wonderful Christian walk. We are good citizens of our respective countries, good members of our respective local churches, and obviously moral people. We are doing the best that we can and really cannot think of anything for which we should repent.

Well, my friend, we are in trouble! Christianity calls for our primary devotion to be to Jesus rather than devotion to self, family, or anything else. A Christian cannot even be a disciple unless he first deny himself, pick up his cross, and follow Jesus (Mark 8:34; Luke 14:26-35). In our modern understanding of discipleship, there is little, if any, sacrifice. Many of us are indulging ourselves by following after the American dream. I don't care how much you or I love Jesus with our sentimental emotions, we are not disciples if we are going after our temporal dreams. Temporal dreams are of treasures in this lifetime, like those described above. Eternal dreams are of treasures in heaven. Paul expressed this principle by saying that temporal treasures are like dung to him. His thinking was that temporal gain for him was really a loss for Christ, and therefore they were dung. His total devotion was toward the excellency of knowing Christ.

We know that the Church in general is in apostasy. How can we know that? Look at 2

Chronicles 7:14. If our land is currently in good shape, then we are not in apostasy. However, it does not take a genius to see that our land is in a mess. Many in the Christian Church cannot figure out right from wrong, good from evil, or light from darkness. Those in Satan's camp know those differences instantly. They want abortion, pornography, homosexuality, divorce, corrupt government, higher taxes, lotteries, government control of life from the womb to the tomb, homosexual marriage, reversal of the gender roles, exclusion of God's Name and the Ten Commandments from all of society, inclusion of Santa Claus and Easter bunnies, inclusion of Satanic worship at Halloween, inclusion of other religions and humanism, anything goes because what is right is intuited by each

individual (with the exception of Christians), removal of the Law, replacing the law code with the subjective law of robed men, removal of free enterprise, expanding restrictions that will kill all but the politically correct businesses, mandating that all journalism be balanced between liberal and more liberal (without any conservative views allowed), education to be dominated by left-wing America-hating socialists. I could go on and on here, but I think that you get the drift.

Well then how should the Christian then live? The answer to that question is the subject matter of this book. You are on a path toward destiny. Please make sure that your destination is correct and your path is straight.

Warning!

Warning: Please know in advance of reading this book that you could have a huge change to occur in your life. If you do not want to change, then do not read this book. Also on the other hand, this book alone will not change your life. You must mix faith with your knowledge and then be willing to change. Change is difficult and many times painful. This much I know—the cost of discipleship is sacrificial, cross-bearing following of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapter 1

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

I want to approach this semester by first talking about apocalyptic literature. I will attempt to form some distance between the book of Revelation and apocalyptic literature. The book of Revelation is *THE APOCALYPSE*, not apocalyptic literature.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Apocalyptic literature is a name that has been given to non-canonical Jewish writings that have an expectation of some kind of a deliverer who will be political in nature. The Book of Revelation has nothing to do with that kind of approach. The Book of Revelation starts off with the Greek word, *Apokalypsis*. *Apokalypsis* means “an unveiling of something otherwise unknowable by man,” and it comes from God. There are non-canonical materials labeled as “apocalyptic,” but these materials do not have their origin in God.

Revelation is an umbrella word. Under this umbrella stand things given to man from God, whether it is prophecy, or a letter, or a psalm, or a drama. Revelation is something that comes from God to man. It is a downward moving thing, which means that it comes under the umbrella of the Doctrine of Revelation (See Chart 1.1).

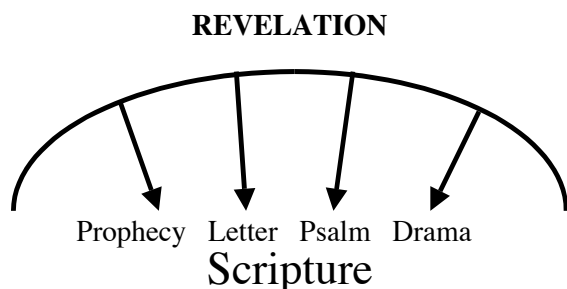


Chart 1.1

The entire Bible is Revelation. If we begin to fall into that trap of considering the

book of Revelation to be within the genre of apocalyptic literature, then we are taking one of the books out of the Bible and lumping it over with this non-canonical apocalyptic literature that deals with political deliverance.

Apocalyptic literature grew out of the hopeful projections of Jews for a strong political champion who would deliver them from their persecutors. This literature originated in times of sinking hopes for freedom in the midst of terrible oppression. To classify the book of Revelation as another in this category is wrong, and it does not do justice to this book that has its origin in God.

Moving the book of Revelation into the non-canonical category will result in falling into some traps. One of those traps is that we could say that the writer of this book is somebody other than the Apostle John. There are, however, some peculiarities about this book that cause it to look different from the Gospel of John. We will need to have some different hermeneutical rules in order to interpret this special book of Revelation. We are going to get some clues from God as to what rules are to be used to interpret this book.

Apokalypsis

The first words in this book are the inarticulate “Apokalypsis of Jesus Christ” which means revelation of Jesus Christ. Revelation is, of course, apokalypsis. It is propositional revelation presented in letterform, drama form, visions, and prophecy (see Chart 1.1). The answer to the question, “Is the Book of Revelation, apocalyptic?” is yes, because it is *THE* apokalypsis from Jesus!

We are going to study this book with a reverence because it is a book of the Bible, God’s Word.

Author

This inerrant book of the Bible says John is the writer, but God is the author. You don't have to go read a bunch of commentaries to find out who wrote the Revelation, just read the Bible.

Historical Context

The best date is A.D. 95, which is during the time of Domitian, the Roman Emperor.

Who was Domitian and how does he relate to Revelation? There are two parts.

A. Problem:

Domitian was Emperor of Rome who claimed to be divine, and demanded to be worshipped. Nonconformance was punishable by death, which is the immediate problem being referenced by the book of Revelation. He is the emperor who banished John to the Isle of Patmos for life.

B. Historical context:

Emperor worship that foreshadows the worship of antichrist that is foretold in the book of revelation developed in history as follows:

1. Before emperor worship, there was the cult of Rome, in which the empire of Rome was deified as a Goddess ("*Dea Roma*").
2. Julius Caesar implemented emperor worship (before Christ) by putting his statue in the temples.
3. Augustus Caesar implemented emperor worship in the provinces during Christ (31 B.C. to A.D. 14).
4. Caligula demanded worship and put his statue in the Jewish temple (A.D. 37 to 41).
5. Nero exploited emperor worship and blamed the fire in Rome on the Chris-

tians (A.D. 54 to 68).

6. Domitian demanded emperor worship and punished nonconformance (A.D. 81 to 96).

You begin with emperor worship and the demand for it. Then the progression goes to the point of being killed for not conforming to it. This progression is important because it foreshadows the rise of Antichrist in the end times. We need to understand what is coming so that we do not fall into the trap of being deceived, and worshipping someone or something that will endanger the Christian faith.

HISTORICAL APPROACHES

Now that we have the date and the occasion and Domitian's purpose, we need to look at the historical approaches to interpretation.

1. The Preterist approach is where the book applies to John's contemporaries only.
2. The Continuous-Historical approach means that the book is a historical laying out of the history of the Christian church over a long period of time.
3. The Futurist approach means that this book applies only to the future.
4. The Philosophical approach is one in which there are principles that God uses to govern history, and this book is a collection of those principles.

It is my choice that we use all of these approaches. I think there is a continuous sweep of history depicted in this book that began with John's contemporaries. There are things that are yet to come in the future. There is a collection of principles by which God will show us how He governs history (past, present, and future). We are moving along in God's history. It is up to us to see how we get there

REVELATION 1

Open up to Revelation 1.

Revelation

1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified [it] by his angel unto his servant John:

Revelation For Slaves

Revelation is the *apocalypsis*. God gave this revelation to show unto his servants (plural). The purpose of this book is for His servants. Servant is slave, *doulos*. Jesus is the slave owner. You have been purchased as a slave. God has a plan for your life, and He is going to spend you the way He wants to.

Some people reading this may not be slaves. If you are not a slave, you are not going to catch on to this book. To be a slave of the Lord means that He tells you what to do, and you do it. It is not what you do on your own, and hope that it pleases Him. A slave is not to do his own thing, but that of the master. If you do your own thing, then you are in rebellion, and there is no wonderful adventure in that. There is going to be eternal loss in that rebellion.

You need to know that the present invitation is for you to become a slave. Some of you are already slaves, but some of you may have something in your heart that is stopping you from surrendering to Jesus. That something has to be removed. This book is going to bring pain and suffering to you, but it can bring rejoicing and blessing to you if you are yielded as a full slave to Jesus Christ. I want you to do that, so I am going to lead in a prayer right now for surrender. Will you surrender all to Jesus Christ, and yield your life in slavery to Him no matter what? No strings, no conditions, you just surrender to the Lord. Will you do it?

Lord, Jesus, I surrender my life to you because I want to be your slave, just like John was your slave. This book was sent to be shown to your slaves, and I want to see, so God please show me your plan. I am your slave no matter what your plan for my life is—I yield it all to you right now to the glory of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Many Students: Amen!

HIERARCHY OF REVELATION

Pathway

Please notice the source of the book of Revelation by looking at Chart 1.2 for its pathway. The Father alone knows the times. He gives the revelation to Jesus. Where it says: “which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants” (v. 1). The destination for the information is the Lord’s servants, i.e. slaves.

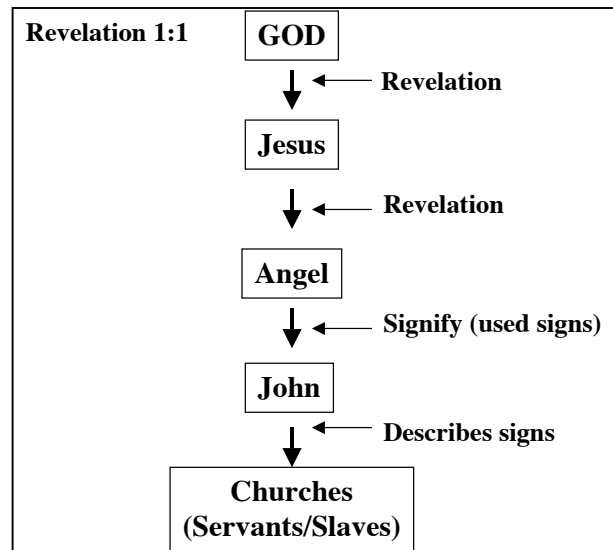


Chart 1.2

The reason why you do not know anything about the book of Revelation is because most churches and Christians are not slaves. If they do not ignore it altogether, they read the book of Revelation and do not

understand it. They come up with all manner of schemes of how to interpret it so that they have no tribulation in their lives. They end up with nothing but blessings for us; they think we are not to have any pain or even any suffering. But this book is really for the true servants/slaves inside our churches.

Signs

The first arrow in the hierarchy goes to Jesus. Jesus gives it to an angel who is going to signify (or show by signs) the information to John (see chart 1.3). As you are driving down the highway, you see a sign that says you ought to reduce your speed to 35 miles per hour. That is a **word sign**. But that is not what came to John. What came to John was a **picture sign**.

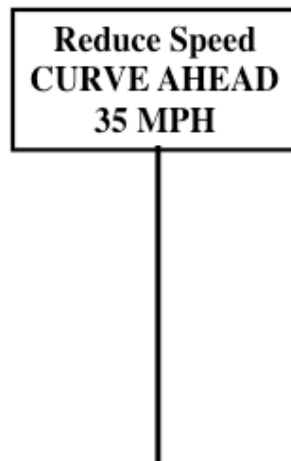


Chart 1.3

Say that you are driving down the road, and you see a picture sign (Chart 1.4). You should interpret that sign within the context of past interpretations. You look at that and you say, "My road is going to curve to the right, and this diamond means slow down.

So when the angel signified this information, he did it with picture signs to John. When the signs came to John, he was told to write down what he saw. So what do you get? John got the sign, but you get the written information "describing the sign," not the information "from the sign." If you begin to look at these words and forget that they are describing a sign, you can move off into some strange territory.

An absurdity occurs when someone interprets the sign as follows: "Okay, that diamond means a jewel. According to the arrow, the jewel was shot straight up into the air and curved to the right before its descent. We will go out here on the right hand side of the road

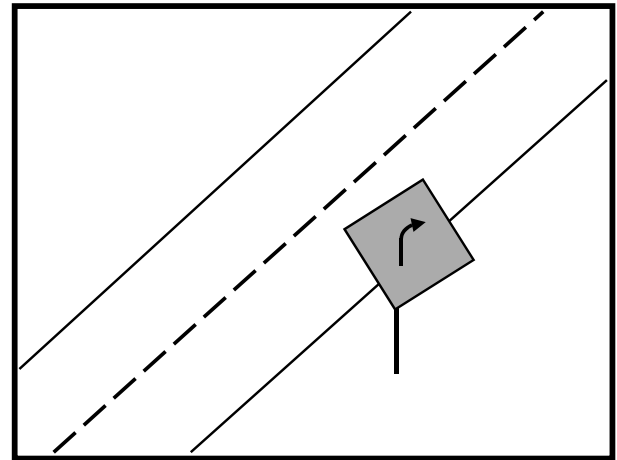


Chart 1.4

and see if we can find that diamond. You see how absurd that is? You didn't take the true meaning of the sign to heart.

John got these pictorial kinds of signs. Instead of interpreting the picture absurdly as above, he is going to write a description of the picture. He would say, I saw a diamond piece of metal with two holes in it and two things that look like bolts or some kind of fasteners, and it was attached to a metal pole. It had a big black line on the metal diamond. The black line went upwards and over to the right. It is up to you to take what he writes and try to find out what it means, i.e. to interpret it.

Do you know how you interpret the sign? God's Word can only be interpreted with the help of the Holy Spirit. Slaves are the only ones who are going to understand the signs. Let God begin to open up to you the understandings of those signs.

He will show us how to do this interpretation in verse 20. But that is too far ahead of us right now. We need to do verses 2 and 3 next.

Blessing

Revelation

1:2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

1:3 Blessed [is] he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time [is] at hand.

If you hear or read the book of Revelation and keep it (believe and obey), you will be blessed. Many of you are going to be blessed this semester. I mean you are going to get your socks knocked off. It is going to change your life, and you will thank God for eternity for this course.

The **time** (v.3) that we are dealing with here is *kairos* rather than *chronos*. *Kairos* is at hand. *Chronos* is past, present, and future. Visualize how it all can be encapsulated into a point (see Chart 1.5). That point is *kairos*,

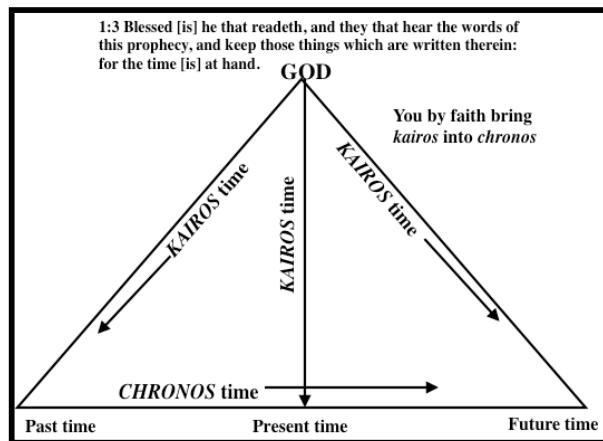


Chart 1.5

and *kairos* is where God intersects *chronos*. He has within Him all of time. He is the I AM. That means wherever you are in *chronos* time, God is. He is always in the past, present, and future. We are in *chronos*, but you, by faith, can bring the *kairos* into the *chronos*. That is how you get God's power brought into the now. You can have by faith what is yet future. You can walk as victorious kings and priests because that is

what you are going to be, and by faith, you can claim those future realities now, have the power of all of that now, and the joy of all that now. It is only by faith, though.

Seven

Revelation

1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace [be] unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Numbers in this book have either quantitative or signatory meanings, or perhaps both. Seven's signatory meaning is of the whole or universal extent of something. It has a universal value. Thus, the seven churches would be a statement that it is the universal church. Seven spirits is the universal spirit.

All through this semester I will be giving you my interpretations of what I think the signs are saying. You do not have to believe my interpretations. I give you the freedom that I wish I had had when I was a student.

The Three Offices Of Christ

When we come down to verse 5 . . .

Revelation

1:5 And from Jesus Christ, [who is] the faithful witness, [and] the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

I want you to see the three offices of the Lord (prophet, priest, and king). Prophet is the first office exemplified in His being the faithful witness. The second one is priest. When you are dealing with sacrifice you are dealing with the priestly ministry of death, and Jesus paid with His own life as a sacrifice for my sins. The third office is the royal office, which deals with ruling, and there it says that He is "the prince of the kings of the earth."

Following after the three offices of Jesus, the functions of the three offices are given. The first function is that He loved us, and that is the prophetic (horizontal) function of love. Do you know to whom you are going to witness? To those you love. Jesus loved us. Therefore, He came to us.

The second function is “washed us.” Washing is the kingly or the royal function. He gives that washing to you through the power that He achieved through His sacrificial work.

Shedding His blood is the third function, i.e. the priestly function. The priestly ministry involves sacrifice. It cannot be done without some cost to the minister. So you have the three offices and the three functions of those offices delineated all in the same verse.

THE TWO ESCHATOLOGICAL OFFICES FOR SAINTS

Verse 6 is an interesting change.

Revelation

1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Orientation of Priests and Kings

He did not say priests, kings, *and prophets* for us. What is going on? He said priests and kings.

Let me tell you what I think this omission means. Right now when you are encountering people in the world, you are serving as a prophet by telling them what the Lord said. You have a responsibility to take that information out (His words). He commands you to herald in the streets and from the rooftops what is whispered in your ear.

However in the eschaton, you are going to be kings and priests. A king exercises rule. A priest brings the petitions of the people to the ruler.

What is the orientation of a king? A king stands above, and says, “This is what I want you to do. Go, do this, this, and this.” God will define the project to you, and then you will have the responsibility to manage the project and issue the instructions from your own understanding.

When you go to the Lord as priests in the eschatological kingdom, you are going to take the people’s problems and petitions to the Lord in the same way that the priest does now. Thus, you will be going to the Lord as priests and going to the people as kings.

This is a serious business because all throughout the Bible you are prophet, priest, and king, but here the prophet is left out of your assignment. Right now you serve as king and priest *and prophet*, but your prophetic service and office is not forever because it will be swallowed up in your kingliness. How interesting that is! I want you to ponder these kinds of things.

Wanda: The priest and king in the heavenlies, would that be conditional upon our being faithful servants here?

V: Yes, good point!

Betty: So, do nothing, you get nothing.

V: That is right. You see there are going to be a lot of peons in heaven. They are going to need some kings to tell them what to do. Your opportunity, then, is to get on board and prove your good servanthood now because “to whom much is given, much is required” (Luke 12:48). If you are faithful in the little things now, when you go to heaven, much will be given to you.

Wanda: We have the promise of heaven once we are saved, but our responsibilities in heaven depend upon meeting our present responsibilities to Christ through faith.

V: That is right!

Lesson Questions

1. Describe the importance of the word slave.
2. What is the hierarchy of revelation for the book of Revelation?
3. What are signs, and how are they used in Revelation?
4. What does the number seven mean in Revelation?
5. Describe the orientation of priests and kings.

Chapter 2

The Hermeneutical Key for Interpretation

JESUS APPEARS TO JOHN

Revelation 1 (Continued)

We finished verse 6 in the last chapter; we will pick up with verse 7.

Revelation

1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they [also] which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

This wail is going to be because the One Who is coming back is going to be coming to bring judgment. They have rejected Him, and to look upon Him is to know yourself as sin. This is going to be a great discomfort for the peoples of the earth.

Revelation

1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Jesus is describing himself as encompassing all of time beginning with the past, coming through the present, and going all the way out to the eschaton.

John

Revelation

1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

John has been banned to the Isle of Patmos, an island where criminals are sent. John tells us He was a witness for Jesus Christ. Because he was a witness he was banished to this island. Tradition has it that they attempted to kill him by dropping him in boiling oil, and it did not kill him. As an old

man condemned to death, they put him on the island to spend the rest of his life there.

Tribulation

I want to point out for you that John is your brother in three things: (1) tribulation, (2) kingdom, and (3) patience. Enduring tribulation is the avenue to the kingdom. You do not get to the kingdom in this life apart from tribulation, and you do not stay in the kingdom apart from patience.

Three references for you to note are: 2 Timothy 3:12, Acts 14:22, and Romans 5:1-5. These passages have to do with tribulation, and they clearly say that there is no departure from it if you are going to follow after righteousness. You and I are going to go through tribulation.

Patience

Luke 21:8-36 and onward deals with patience. Luke 21:8 says, "And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived . . ." We talked about deception last week. Deception is unknown by the one being deceived. The knowing of truth sets us free from deception.

Luke

21:8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am [Christ]; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

21:9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end [is] not by and by.

21:10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

21:11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pesti-

lences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

21:12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute [you], delivering [you] up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

21:13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

21:14 Settle [it] therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:

21:15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

21:16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and [some] of you shall they cause to be put to death.

21:17 And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake.

21:18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

21:19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

Patience is pictured in Chart 2.1. If I am going to practice patience, I am going to stand under a burden. *Hupomeno* is the Greek word for patience, and it means to abide under (*hupo* = under, and *meno* = abide). The great pressing burden is the persecution of all Christians who hold tenaciously to their confessed allegiance to their Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 21:12).

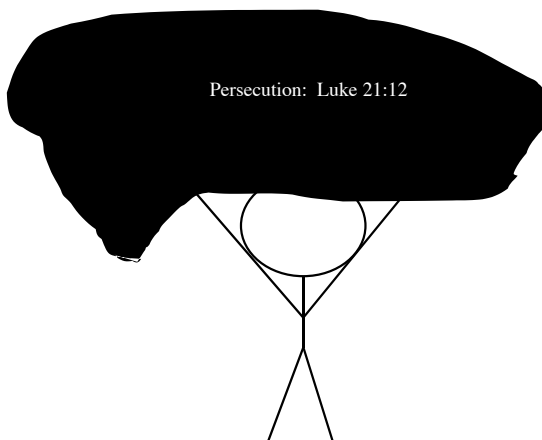


Chart 2.1

If you pander to your own flesh, you are going to run and escape to some easy place. But if you will be patient, you will stand under this burden of your Christian allegiance, and you can imagine it being like a giant burden on your shoulders as depicted in Chart 2.1. You are holding this burden up, you are tired, and you are going through life holding this burden up. Your knees are shaking, and your muscles are straining, and your bones are hurting. You want to drop it off and be like everybody else. But patience holds you under it, and you abide under it all the way to your death. That is what patience is.

You possess your souls in patience in (Luke 21:19). Your soul possesses you when you drop the burden. To possess your soul is to be able to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus.¹ It means to be able to say no to your soul and yes to the pain and to the sacrifice. However, the burden becomes light for the true disciple in yoke with Jesus.²

He says that you are not to give thought to what you are going to say. Settle that in your heart! What are you going to say? You are going to say “Yes” to Jesus, and “No” to the fear of death. Settle that in your hearts and begin to practice it now in your Christian witness. When the time comes for your death, God will give you the wisdom and the words that will destroy the arguments of those people.³

We have a history full of our forefathers who have died nobly because it was settled in

¹ Matthew 16:24

² Matthew 11:30

³ God gives His true disciples dying grace. It is the power to go through torture and death. It is a supernatural enablement that has been demonstrated throughout the history of Christian martyrdom. However, please remember that dying grace is not given **before** the dying moment. We must possess our souls by facing our own fears. Like salvation, grace is given only to the willing.

their hearts. These people overcame their fear of death by possessing their souls where the will resides. Please remember that God does not give dying grace on a non-dying day, but when the dying day arrives, God's grace will be there for us. The pathway to the kingdom is through tribulation, and patience holds you in that tribulation.

JESUS IS SEEN

In verse 9 John linked himself with us, and in verse 10 he says,

Revelation

1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, . . .

John is in the Spirit walking with Jesus on the Lord's Day. He is worshipping the Lord, and as he draws close to the Lord, the Lord draws close to him and speaks to him, and it is a voice that sounds like a trumpet behind John. Verse 11 says that the voice identifies Himself as the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. The voice gives him a commandment to write about what he sees and send it to the seven churches:

Revelation

1:11 . . . What thou seest, write in a book, and send [it] unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

The number "seven" gives the idea of being the whole of a thing. The seven churches of God is the whole church. There are seven specific churches, but together they represent the whole church.

Revelation

1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks [one] like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the

foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

The Church Is Seen First

Focus your attention here on the fact that the Lord is behind John speaking to him; when John turns, he does not see the Lord. He sees the church. He turns and sees the candlesticks, and then he sees One walking among the candlesticks. When the world looks at you, they see you first, and then they see Who is walking among you. The lost people cannot see Jesus without a witness from His disciples.

These candlesticks are **not** the Jewish candlesticks that have the seven arms that come up (as in Chart 2.2). It is seven independent candlesticks. Each church stands on its own, and has not a corporate destiny but an individual destiny. There is both unity and distinction in the destiny just as there is in individual Christians.

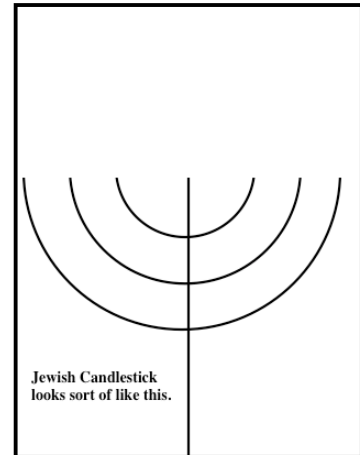


Chart 2.2

Many people dislike hearing about distinctions in heaven. They want to think they are going to have crowns and mansions and glory just because they are saved. Please know for certain that there is going to be both perfection and distinctions in heaven, but I want you to know what perfection means. If you have a 40-watt light bulb, and a 100-watt light bulb, both of them are perfect, but when you turn them on, the 100-watt light bulb is brighter. Thus you have distinction within perfection.

Just as there are different wattages in light bulbs, there are differences in Christians. We are not a lockstep bunch. Each of us has different gifts, different callings. The only way for you to please God is for you to follow Him. My fellowship is going to look a whole lot different from your fellowship; otherwise we are all trying to perform the same functions.

Larry came by my office to discuss his calling in the Body of Christ. He wanted to be an eye, and I said, "No, you are not an eye, you are a toe." He got all upset at me and argued about that. We broke off our conversation promising to pray about it for a week. When we came back together, Larry said that God told him that he was still going to be an eye. I said, "Okay, God told me that He is going to let you be an eye, but the only thing you are going to see is the inside of a sock." (Much laughter.)

Carl: The candlesticks represent the light of the seven churches?

V: No, actually the seven candlesticks represent the churches themselves. We will see this when we get to the hermeneutic.

Lord Described

A description of the Lord begins with his priestly garment. This garment is also described in Exodus 28. Let us now move on to His personal descriptions.

Revelation

1:14 His head and [his] hairs [were] white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes [were] as a flame of fire;

1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

John saw a white-headed man whose eyes burned like fire, a fire that lights, consumes, evaluates, and does the purification. Amazingly, John looks down at the Lord's feet. His feet are like burnished bronze. They are

bright and shiny because they have come through the fire.

Beautiful Feet

Our Lord has given us an example to follow so that we will walk through the fire. Somewhere it says something about beautiful are the feet.⁴ Beautiful feet belong to those who take the message of hope to the people. Stay under the burden no matter what comes against you. When you go through the fire on your way to heaven, the people of heaven will look at your feet, and say, "He has been through the fire, beautiful feet."

We need to get our feet burnished. Keep pressing forward. Stay under the burden no matter what comes against you. You keep pressing forward, you take that message on out there, and nothing but death shall stand in your way. It is for sure that you will be persecuted because the Bible declares it. You must settle it in your hearts ahead of time every day that you are not going to run from the burden.

Many people want to have no pain, no suffering, easy life, Christianity as a bed of roses, continuous celebration, name it and claim it prayers. When all this suffering comes down, how are you going to react?

Kenosis

Life is made up of the temporal and the eternal. When you can see with the eyes of wisdom and faith, you can see the difference. Philippians 2 tells us about the *kenotic* walk, the walk of denying yourself, picking up your cross, and going after the Lord even unto death. Jesus came down. He humbled Himself. He was a servant. He became a man even though He was equal to God. That equality with God was no theft because that

⁴ Romans 10:15... "as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

was who He was. He had no temporal reputation because He emptied Himself (the actual definition of *kenosis*). He became obedient even unto death on the cross. This is the *kenotic* pathway (see Chart 2.3).

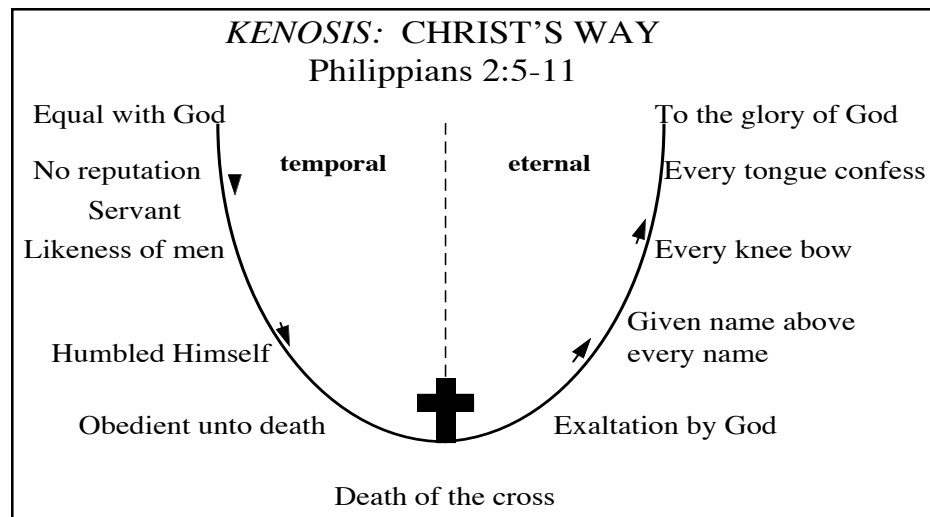


Chart 2.3

Jesus died on the cross. He left His first estate (emptied Himself) and came down as a man and a servant, and He met His death. Because He was obedient to the Father, He was exalted.

The left side of Chart 2.3 is the temporal realm, and the right is the eternal. After Jesus died on the cross, He was exalted even to the point of people calling Him Lord and bowing the knee to Him. He is Lord on the right side of the chart, but He got there through a temporal descent.

The same principle applies to us. The Scriptures about suffering also apply to us. The way to the kingdom is through suffering and patience. He did what God's Word tells us.

What is your path? It is identical to the Lord's path. God commands us in Philippians 2:5 to have this *kenotic* mind that was demonstrated by Jesus. He is our model. Jesus came to seek and to save that which is lost. He did it through death. Guess what

you have to do? You are going to do the same thing. We must sacrifice for the lost world: "As my Father has sent me, so send I you."⁵

You can't be a disciple apart from self-denial. Therefore, as you come down, the temporal path on the left side of Chart 2.3, you are following the Lord. Patience is to stay on the path. Grab hold and hang on to Him. You can see the cross ahead, but you stay on the path and keep going toward it. Your whole psychology, your whole soul, every part of our being says, "throw the bur-

den off, get out of here." But if you are patient, you will possess your soul and go to the cross. You will not deny the Lord. You are His slave, and you will let Him give you the words when the trial takes place because it is settled in your heart.

In order to follow Jesus, we must travel the *kenotic* path. We will suffer in this life, but we will be exalted in heaven: If you lose your life, you will have it.⁶ Whoever is last shall be first.⁷ He says, "Not a hair of your head will perish."⁸

Upside Down *Kenosis*

The reverse of the *kenosis* is a horrible and deceptive thing, but we all are caught up in it. Instead of denying ourselves, we indulge ourselves. Instead of sacrificing and becoming humble, we become proud and

⁵ John 20:21.

⁶ Matthew 10:39.

⁷ Matthew 20:16; Mark 9:35; Luke 13:30.

⁸ Luke 21:18

arrogant. Instead of going to the death, we climb to life, wealth, status, and a throne.

But there is another side to this upside-down *kenosis*. If you achieve your exaltation on the temporal side, you will be humbled in eternity (see Chart 2.4). There are eternal

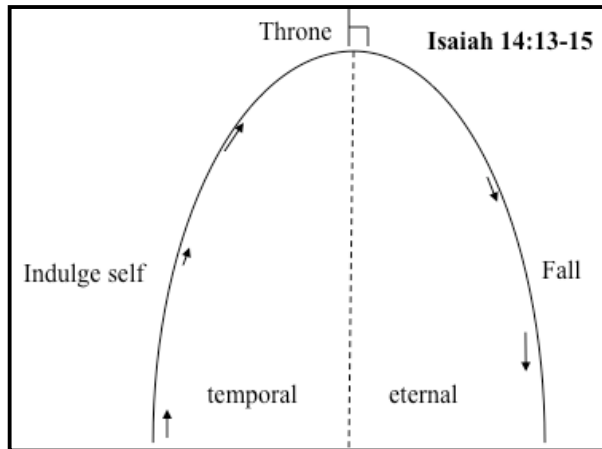


Chart 2.4

consequences for our present walks. If you can begin now to see across this chasm from the temporal to the eternal in your *kenosis* (see Chart 2.3), you will gain much wisdom. It takes the eye of faith because you cannot help but see the suffering and sacrifice on the temporal side with the natural eye. There is the stake. There are the fires; you are to be burned at the stake like some of our forefathers. You are looking at the fires as you are approaching them, and you think, “My goodness! I don’t know if I can handle this or not.” But if it is settled in your heart, you can look across, past the death (the secret is: **look past your problem**). This vision is described as laying hold of the hope that is an anchor of the soul that lies on the other side of the veil.⁹

Jack: Are you saying about the *kenosis* that we should be patient all the way through to the end to reach our just reward?

V: Yes. You despise your suffering for the heavenly joy. You can do the same thing as the Lord. Patience means you stay with it.

Hupomeno. *Hupo* means under, and *meno* means to abide. You abide under it.

Sybil: What does *kenosis* mean?

V: It means to empty yourself. And that is why this starts off “He emptied Himself.” Philippians 2:7: “Made himself of no reputation” (KJV).

Henry: God promises that we will be joint heirs with Him in the by and by.¹⁰

V: There will be no joint heirs apart from the joint walk. Without the walk, the joint destination of heaven will be without the joint rewards in heaven.

Let us go to verse 16.

Revelation

1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance [was] as the sun shineth in his strength.

He has brilliance in His countenance, in His right hand are the seven stars, and out of His mouth comes the two-edged sword. The two-edged sword is the Word of God, and the seven stars are, as we are going to see in verse 20, the seven angels.

Revelation

1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

1:18 I [am] he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Fear

“Fear not” is volitional. Fearing when you see with your eyes, fearing when you hear with your ears, fearing when you feel with the touch are all spontaneous. It is involuntary because it comes with the senses. What the Lord does here is to command you

⁹ Hebrews 6:18-20.

¹⁰ Romans 8:17.

to take hold of that fear, and then, bring it under your will. He wants you to move it from the sensory, or perceptory sensation, to the rational. Fear will move you off the *kenosis*. Fear is the enemy of faith. Peter walked on water until fear gripped his soul, and then he began to sink.

In order to conquer fear, you have to move to the rational. Jesus presents a vision of Himself as something for you to hang your rational thought on. He identifies Himself as the First and the Last, the One who was dead and now lives, and has control of the angels.

Fear, comes into you because of what you see in your eyes. You see something, and you say, “Oh, I cannot bear that.” No, you must grab hold of that fear because it is an involuntary response to your perception or sensations. You must grab hold of that fear, bring it under your will, and then use reason to hold it there and conquer it.

If you can begin to see with the eyes of faith, you can look beyond the cross to the eternal, i.e. ***look past your problem.*** Then you will not fear the temporal because the exaltation has to come through the gateway of the cross. That is the rational overcoming of your fear. Yes, fear can erupt in you involuntarily. But you must bring that fear under your will and reason and seal it with your faith; that can only be done by observing Jesus beyond your temporal problem. Jesus said, “I transcend both time and the grave, John.” John feared and fell down as a dead man. Jesus put His hand on him, and said, “Fear not for I AM.” That is how you are going to conquer fear.

You cannot conquer fear by dwelling on the temporal area because that will invite disaster. Jesus bridges the chasm from the temporal to the eternal. By focusing on Him, you can bridge the chasm, too.

Tim: I was thinking about the Scripture that says, “God has not given us the spirit of

fear” (2 Timothy 1:7). The spirit of fear then comes from Satan.

V: Yes, and God commands us to fear not.

Please do not be confused. God does not remove the fear. Conquering the fear is our part of the process. We provide our wills, and only then does God provide the power.

Bob: Sound-mindedness is the spirit He has given us. We have to use that sound mindedness to subdue those fears.

V: Yes. You are in a war, and fear is one of the weapons being used against you. You can take hold of it and bring it under your rational faith and stay on path.

Revelation

1:19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

Jesus tells John to write down **what he has seen**. He also indicates that the visions will be in the context of linear time—**the past, the present, and the future**. The Lord, then, describes Himself on our kind of timeline. Thus John is told to write about the visions that he received about the sweep of history.

Now Jesus gives John the hermeneutic in verse 20.

HERMENEUTIC

Revelation

1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

Stars, then, are angels, and the candlesticks are churches. That is a hermeneutic that we can take hold of. The Lord gave it to us in the first chapter, and we are going to take it the rest of the way in this course.

Jack: Since there are angels appointed unto the churches, I know that we have read in other commentaries where demons are appointed to the nations and people. Is that the same context?

V: Yes, exact same context.

Joe: Is not the reference to angels here the pastors of the churches?

V: Most of the commentaries say that angels are pastors. I am going to come down on this idea right here: in the book of Revelation you have the star symbol refer to angels. If star refers to pastors, then you have another or third thing. I am going to stop at this point with the way the Lord said it. But you do not have to agree with me! You have every right to be wrong (whole class laughs).

I must follow the Lord's hermeneutic. This whole book is composed of signs. The Lord gives us important life-or-death instruction throughout the entire book in signs, but He is giving us a hermeneutic here about how to get down to the real thing that is being signified.

Paul: You have freed my mind to look at symbols in Revelation for symbols sake. The way I see it now, God through Jesus Christ sends an angel to the church and empowers that angel to thereby empower the pastors thereby to empower the people.

V: No, you left out John and the slaves. The hierarchy is delineated in the first verse of the whole book of Revelation. The information comes from **God** to **Jesus** to an **angel**. Then the information is converted to visionary signs by the angel and given to **John** who had been told to write down what he sees so that it could be given to the Lord's **slaves** (look back at Chart 1.2). We reach an absurdity with departing from the Lord's hermeneutic which interprets the stars as angels. To insist that the angel is not an angel but a pastor, then we have one of you pastors

giving the signs in the form of visions to the Apostle John in the hierarchy of Chart 1.2

Now before I move to Chapter 2 of Revelation, let's review our hermeneutic. God is speaking in signs. John is describing the signs, and we are to interpret the signs from the descriptions. God interpreted the first two signs for us so that we could see how to do it. God says that **candlesticks are churches** and that **stars are angels**. Therefore throughout this book references to stars and candlesticks will mean angels and churches respectively.

REVELATION 2

John took his commission from the Lord seriously, and he started writing. Now that is neat. Kind of different now, is it not? He has to beg us, and then He cannot get half of us to do what He wants us to do. Only His disciples (slaves) obey Him.

We must not be literalists in this imagery. God said that He is signing this message through His angel to John. That means that John sees images, and He writes down what he sees which are descriptions of images. It is up to faithful slaves to understand what God is saying through these images. That is why we had the prayer last week of commitment of ourselves to be slaves. This book is only for slaves. If you are not a slave, you are not going to get the understanding. You will get it only to the Christian level. But if you are going to get what God is saying, you are going to have to get beyond the normal Christian level. You have to be a slave, i.e. a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

EPHESUS

Chapter two starts off with the first church he is going to address, the church at Ephesus.

Revelation

2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven

EPHESUS

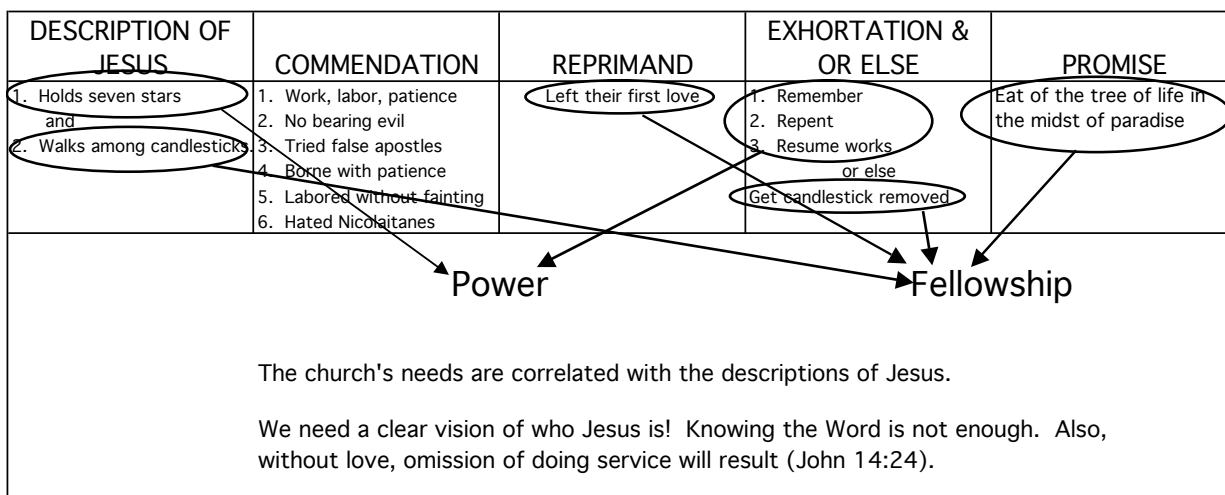


Chart 2.5

golden candlesticks;

2:2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

2:3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

2:4 Nevertheless I have [somewhat] against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

I have done a detailed analysis of the material discussed in the passages dealing with the seven churches. Chart 2.5 is for Ephesus.

The name, Ephesus, means desirable. The Bride of Christ is desirable to Christ.

Description of Jesus

The description of Jesus is twofold:

1. He holds the seven stars
2. He walks among the seven candlesticks

Commendations

1. Work, labor, and patience
2. No bearing evil
3. Tried false apostles
4. Borne with patience
5. Labored without fainting
6. Hate Nicolaitanism.

You see what I am doing, taking the descriptions just like they are in the Scriptures, so that I can begin to see a picture of this kind of church. God says that he (singular pronoun) that has an ear should hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Every one of us is going to get categorized into one of these seven churches here. When you determine which category you are,

hear what the Spirit says to the churches, and do what He tells you to do.

Homer: Are you implying that the exhortation applies to the individual Christian?

V: You bet. We are not dealing with institutions. We are dealing with kinds, or categories, of Christians within the universal church. God says that he (singular pronoun) who has an ear should hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches (Rev. 2:7). If you have an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to you. That is a command. We prayed that we would have ears. The sad thing is that I have preached in churches filled with people that have solid bone on each side of their heads.

Joe: The Nicolaitans are *Gnostics* or something like that are they not?

V: You can read the commentaries and choose whether to believe them or believe me. I cannot find an authority for Nicolaitanism. I choose to analyze the name. “Nico” is to fight or do battle with, to conquer. “Laitanism” is the laity or laymen. This means hierarchicalism, i.e. clericalism (which is discussed in the course on Evangelism), in the church. Nicolaitanism is for somebody to gain spiritual authority over the laity. By gaining power over the laity, the clergy gets between the people and the Lord.

Paul: It is kind of like how the institutional church became the only source of salvation in church history during the Middle Ages.

V: Exactly. And God hates that kind of deal. It dethrones Jesus Christ as Lord. He alone does the saving. You follow Jesus Christ because He is your Savior and your Lord—nobody else. My job as teacher is to get your hand into His hand and then get out of the way. If I can do that, you will be on the greatest adventure your life can have, but if you follow me, it will be humdrum and disaster.

Steve: Amen! (Whole class begins to laugh).

V: Touché! (smile)

Reprimand for Ephesus

The reprimand column has one item—left first love. Ephesus was the church where John spent some time. The church had the Apostle Paul and Timothy there for a while. When Paul went to Macedonia he left Timothy at Ephesus to recover from his illness and follow later. After Paul was executed in Rome, Timothy came back to Ephesus, and they grabbed him and executed Timothy in honor of the goddess, Artemis. Later, John was banished to the Isle of Patmos from Ephesus. Now he is writing back to his church. He was the last bishop there.

Notice this: The Apostle John is known as the apostle of love. The Gospel of John is the Gospel about love. John is writing this letter from Patmos back to his church. Even though he taught and exemplified love for Jesus, they have left their first love to express their love for another through obedience to the other (Nicolaitanism). At His very strength is where they departed. It is very hurtful to Jesus for His saint (His bride) to love and obey another person more than Him.

Pastors, if you are hurting out there, you are hammering, and hammering, and you are giving them your best. Just know that there was the Apostle John ahead of you that gave it his best, and at his very strength is where they departed.

Exhortations for Ephesus

The exhortation and or-else for Ephesus are:

1. Remember
2. Repent
3. Resume works (or else get candlestick removed)

Many people think that Gospel and grace preclude works, but I must tell you that works

are essential to the sanctification part of our salvation. You are saved unto good works. The “Else” for your omission is that your candlestick will be removed (dead church).

Promise for Ephesus

The Lord’s promise to the overcomers is to be allowed to eat of the tree of life in the midst of paradise.

If you will re-examine Chart 2.5, you will see how these items are related. Jesus is described as holding the seven stars. That tells me of His power. He also walks among the seven candlesticks. That describes fellowship. Why do you think He described Himself in terms of power and fellowship to this church? “First love” deals with fellowship. “Remove the lampstand” deals with fellowship, “do the first works” deals with power. Eating of the tree of paradise deals with fellowship. His personal description is interconnected with the exhortation, reprimand, and promise.

Who of you in here is Ephesus? You need to see the power of your Lord, and you need to see the fear of losing your fellowship with Him. You need to have the fear of losing your candlestick, of His setting you upon the shelf, and saying, “Just sit up there and do not bother me. I have some real disciples that I am going to use to carry My banner and do

My work in the world. You are free to choose to live your own life of playing, pursuing your own career, and doing your own thing. I am going to work with My real warriors.”

The Apostle Paul feared that he could be set aside, not to lose his salvation, but to be set aside and not called on to bring glory to the Lord. Can you think of a worse fate in this life? Remember, repent, and then step out. That is what He wants of you in this church. Draw close to Him; He will draw close to you.

Sybil: Just like with Jeremiah. Repent or lose your office.

V: That is right.

SMYRNA

John had disciples around him in Ephesus including Polycarp, Papias and Ignatius. These guys became famous in their own right because they were burned at the stake or eaten by lions. They suffered with patience all the way to the end.

Polycarp became the bishop at Smyrna. He was the disciple of the Apostle John in the same way that Timothy was the disciple of the Apostle Paul. This is the story of Polycarp’s arrest and his martyrdom. It is an example worth following.

MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP

The Bishop of Smyrna

A.D. 155

Written by the church at Smyrna

Taken from

Documents of the Christian Church

edited by Henry Bettenson,

1963 edition, Oxford University Press.

During the games of pitting Christians against wild beasts in Smyrna, the people desired Polycarp to be brought among the atheists.

Note: The reason they called Christians atheists was because they would not adopt all of the polytheism that the Roman Empire had adopted. The Roman Empire, every time they conquered a

nation, adopted the gods of that nation, and so they just kept adding on gods in their worship. Pretty soon they had a whole pantheon of gods to be worshiped. Christians in Rome refused to worship all of those gods. So Christians were called atheists by the Romans.

Polycarp had been earlier apprehended as a Christian leader. The sheriff, who was sent to bring him to the stadium, tried to persuade him to confess Caesar as Lord and thereby save himself. When Polycarp refused to confess Caesar as Lord, he was taken to the stadium to be killed. As Polycarp entered the stadium, a voice from heaven was heard by Polycarp and the Christian witnesses to tell Polycarp to “be strong and play the man.” (p. 10) But the Proconsul urged him, “Swear and I will release thee; curse the Christ” (p.10). And Polycarp said, “Eighty and six years have I served him, and he has done me no wrong: how can I blaspheme my king who saved me?” (p. 10)

When the Proconsul continued to persist, Polycarp answered “If thou dost vainly imagine that I will swear by the genius of Caesar as thou sayest, pretending not to know what I am, hear plainly that I am a Christian. And if thou art willing to learn the doctrine of Christianity, grant me a day and hearken to me.” (p. 10)

After the fire was laid and about to be lit, they were about to nail Polycarp to the stake, when he said, “Let me be as I am. He that granted me to endure the fire will grant me also to remain at the pyre unmoved without being secured with nails.” (p. 11)

“All the people were amazed at the great difference between unbelievers and the elect. . .” (pp. 11-12)

Class! Polycarp is a great example of solid Christianity. There is a difference between the *kenotic* Christian and those on the upside down *kenosis*, and if you can just settle it in

your hearts, the world will see that difference. Polycarp was the bishop of the church to receive the second letter. We will deal with the contents of that letter in the next chapter.

Lesson Questions

1. Explain how Jesus is seen after the church is seen?
2. Describe the hermeneutic, and under it, what are the stars and the candlesticks?
3. Describe the Lord’s appearance to John.
4. What is the relationship between fear and faith?
5. Who was Polycarp and how did he die?

Chapter 3

LETTERS TO CHURCHES

SMYRNA

We had the introduction to Smyrna in the last chapter, with Polycarp, the pastor of Smyrna, being burned. Now we are going to look at the church. See Chart 3.1 for this church.

Revelation

2:8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 2:9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and [I know] the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but [are] the synagogue of Satan.

2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast [some] of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Smyrna, is named after its chief product, myrrh. Myrrh is the incense that gives good smell, like a perfume, that can give a good odor to something. It is also used for embalming the dead.

The church's description connects specifically to Polycarp. The Jews, the synagogue of Satan, were the people so zealous in the building of the fire and the bringing of Polycarp to the stake to be burned. The synagogue of Satan is any synagogue that rejects Jesus.

Commendations for Smyrna

The commendations are three. These Christians are noted for their works. In the midst of all their trials and poverty, they continue doing all phases of the *Missio Dei*. God commends their tribulation and poverty.

SMYRNA

DESCRIPTION OF JESUS	COMMENDATION	REPRIMAND	EXHORTATION & OR ELSE	PROMISE
1. First and last 2. Dead and alive	1. Works and tribulation 2. Poverty, being blasphemed by Jews.	None	1. Fear not future trials, tribulations, and suffering 2. Be faithful unto death	1. Crown of Life 2. No second death
Jesus is <u>total time line</u> and our <u>hope</u>				

Chart 3.1

However, their poverty is only in the temporal and material realm. They are actually rich in the spiritual realm. They have laid up treasure in heaven.

God commands these Christians not to fear. Fear is volitional. It is countered by a sound, rational mind. We must use our minds to use our faith and hope in order to conquer fear. Fear is spontaneous, and it arises with anticipated pain and suffering, but God says to fear not what we shall suffer.

Tribulation Ten Days

“Ye shall have tribulation ten days” does not mean ten 24-hour days duration. I think this is once again a signing of a truth. The people of Smyrna, and some of you are of Smyrna, are going to have tribulation throughout their lives. Ten days signifies to me that it is the whole *temporal* thing in the same way that “seven” gives a universal concept. The “seven” spirits indicates to me the Holy Spirit, which is the “whole” *eternal* Spirit. The ten days is the whole thing, too, but it cuts off at the end of time. Those of you, then, that are of this church are going to suffer the rest of your lives. Mark it down! Do not be surprised.

The one who suffered, was tried, and was found faithful all the way unto death was Polycarp. Polycarp is your model. If you are of Smyrna, Polycarp then would be a typical model for you. You can look at him and see something of what is going to happen to you as well. Polycarp got the crown of life. You Smyrnans are going to get it too if you persevere unto death.

Description of Jesus

Make sure you have an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches because if you overcome, if you press on through, if you settle it in your heart, if you stand under the burden, if you go to the end, you, too, will have the promise: “He that overcometh shall

not be hurt of the second death.” That is a double negative that means there is absolutely no way that the second death can touch you. That is not to indicate now that the second death can apply to some other saved person. This is a double negative in Greek that does not convert to a positive. It is a confirmed negative. Not only is there no way under the sun that the Smyrna Christian can be touched by the second death, but also there is the promise of the crown of life.

The description of Jesus to Smyrna is that He is the first and the last, and He was dead and is alive. Every one of us is responsible to interpret this work. I am not the authority in what we are talking about here in this description of Jesus. You that teach others have the same responsibility that I have. I took my best shot, and I decided that the description interpreted here is that Jesus is the total timeline and our hope. The description of Jesus in this passage will apply to this particular church.

How do you perceive Jesus? Each of us has a perception of Jesus. The way you perceive him indicates where you land in all of these churches. How you perceive Jesus indicates how you behave. How you behave is who you are. You can analyze yourself in these passages.

It is a lot easier for us to come in the back door and look at our behavior and our thinking and attitudes toward the Christian life, and then come to one of these churches that has similarities. We can look then, at their perception of Jesus and say, “That must be mine as well.” That is a back-door approach. But what this passage is coming in with is a front-door approach. He starts with Jesus and how the church perceives Him and how He is to be looked at, then looks at the church’s behavior and gives the commendations and the reprimands.

Bob: It is not that I am disagreeing with you, but in all of our other reading, the ten indicated a short period of time.

V: I know. I am telling you my interpretation, and they are telling theirs. Pay your dollar and take your choice. Your lifetime is a short period of time in the broader scope of time because it ends in death. Thus, my interpretation harmonizes the two patterns.

Smyrna Needs Hope

In drawing the lines on the chart, “being faithful unto death” would have a line drawn to hope from it. “Fear not future sufferings” and “tribulations” would also go to hope. “The crown of life” and “no second death” goes to hope. So, then, Smyrna needs hope.

You Smyrnans need hope. Anybody going through suffering has to have hope, and that hope goes out beyond the ten days because inside the ten days is suffering. Hope that goes beyond the veil is the anchor of our souls (Hebrews 6:18-20).

Remember the *kenosis*? By looking across the gap, we could see the future resurrection and glorification. Please see that Jesus goes forever. He never ends. He is resurrected. He is the Lord, and He will bring you into that category of Christians receiving the glorious Crown of Life, but you have to have hope. Otherwise you cannot stay on your path that is full of suffering. You have to view Jesus as the resurrected Lord without beginning and without end. Once dead, but now alive, and you Smyrnans are going to follow the same model.

Hope will carry you all the way through. Smyrna needs that hope. Even though there is no reprimand for Smyrna, there is the challenge: Persevere all the way unto the death. Your hope is in Jesus Christ. So look at Him in His eternity so that you can persevere. There is where your hope is. It is your perception of Jesus.

Hope will hold you fast, as an anchor, under the burden. Without the hope to enable us to stay under that burden, our spiritual life will go to nothing. Our perseverance disappears. As a matter of fact if you have no hope, you will not take another step. Why should you if you have no hope? But make sure your hope is not in the temporal realm within the ten days. Focus not into the temporal. Look across the chasm with the eyes of faith. Look at Jesus who was dead in the temporal but alive in the eternal. There is your hope.

Jerry: By faith you look across, but you can still get hung up. If you are living right but do not have the full faith to see across, you still can screw up here.

V: Yes, you can. If you start looking into the ten-day, you have already messed up. Don't do that because you will start to climb, take care of yourself, and bring your rewards into the temporal realm. Once you do that, you have your reward, then there is the fall on the other side. Look past the ten days. Look over into eternity. Look at the resurrected Lord. That is how you have that hope for a more glorious resurrection.

PERGAMOS

An interesting thing about Pergamos is that it is made up of two words. *Gamos* is marriage. I do not know what the “per” means, but I do know that *gamos* means marriage. So this church has marriage in its name like Smyrna has myrrh in its name.

Revelation

2:12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

2:13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, [even] where Satan's seat [is]: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas [was] my faithful martyr,

who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

2:16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth [it].

Description of Jesus

Jesus is described as wielding a sharp sword with two edges. He means to cut something. He wants to cut this church loose from its bondage. As we will see, this church is in bondage to the world.

Commendations for Pergamos

God commends these Christians for their works. They are persevering in ministry in a hostile environment. They are ministering in Satan's seat. In other words, they are ministering where it is not politically correct to do so.

They hold fast to Jesus' name, and they do not deny the faith. They are willing to go all the way to the death because of their faith. Jesus specifically mentions Antipas as an example of a faithful martyr.

However, they have adapted to an unhealthy environment. In verse 13 is the word "dwellest." That word does not indicate something good! "Dwellest." Here is a church that is no longer pilgrim in character. It is "dwelling" there where Satan's seat is.

"Dwelling" ties to the word *gamos*, marriage. This church is married to the world!

Map Depicts Upside Down Kenosis

I will show you something else. On the map of Turkey (see Chart 3.2), you can see Patmos out in the Mediterranean Sea. The first church is Ephesus right on the coast. The next church is north to Smyrna and then north to Pergamos.

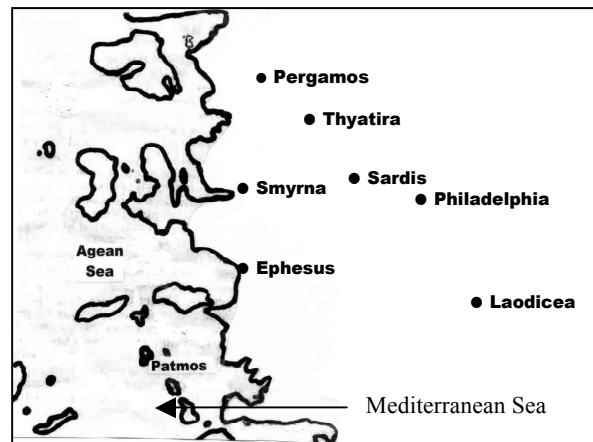


Chart 3.2

In my Church History class we discuss what slight little changes will do to you (see Chart 3.3). Small deviations get us into trouble. So here is the church on the straight and narrow just like the Lord called it to do. Then it deviates just a little bit. It goes like that for a while. Then it deviates a little bit more. We are talking about little, tiny deviations.

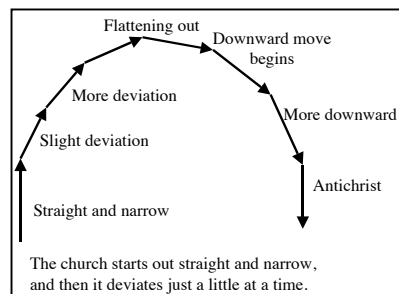


Chart 3.3

These are not big changes to get excited about, just little doctrinal things. So you have another one, and then another one.

And then you are antichrist.

Watch what the Lord does with this map (Chart 3.4). There is a straight line going from Ephesus to Smyrna, straight line up to Pergamos. Then there is a marriage with the world. There is a down turn to Thyatira, another to Sardis and to Philadelphia. There is an attempt to straighten out at Philadelphia, but then to Laodicea. You have a map of the world. This map is not coincidental!

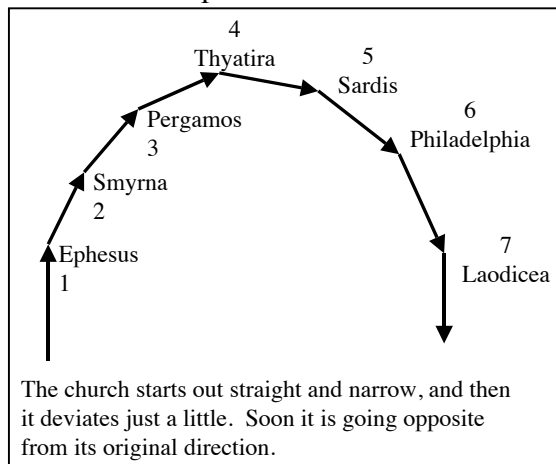


Chart 3.4

The church of Pergamos was married to the world. The reason we can say that is because of the word “dwellest.” The church at Pergamos is not a pilgrim in the world. It dwellest in the world; it is at home in the world. Dwelling means that it has driven down its stakes, its roots are down deep. They have adapted to Satan’s seat. It is married to the world.

This church has a great commendation. They have not denied their faith, and they have had martyrs like Antipas. There are some good things going on in this church. But there are some serious reprimands for this church as well.

Reprimands for Pergamos

Revelation

2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, . . .

All right, Balaam is the profit prophet.¹ The profit prophet is a person who does his prophecy for gain, a mercenary approach to ministry.

You and I may bypass the literal part, i.e. encouraging the intermarriage of Christians to non-Christians, and marry the world attitudinally. That would be just as bad as Israel’s devastating sin, and it will sink us. That marriage with the world is a big problem that the church is having today. That is what brings it around, like the map, closer to antichrist. When you are involved in the *kenosis*² you are involved in self-denial. When you are involved in the opposite of the *kenosis*³ you are involved in gain.

Balaam, the false prophet is the preview of the false prophet who will come up in the later chapters of Revelation. The false prophet’s ministry is for temporal gain, but the true prophet sacrifices by adopting the *kenosis*. *Kenotic* sacrifice is the walk of a pilgrim. Dwelling is the climb of adaption, opposite the *kenosis*. We must get it into our hearts and our minds that we are dedicated all the way, that we are not going to dwell, and that we are going to be pilgrims. We are not going to marry the world and become antichrists. We are going to marry Jesus.

Pergamos has taken on the character of the world. It is worldly. There is not much difference between them and the world.

¹ The profit prophet is Balaam, and in order to bring about a curse to Israel, he taught Balac how to lead Israel into marrying Moabite women. That comes back to this word, marriage. Balaam wanted to bring about a curse to the people of Israel, and he taught Balac how to encourage Israel to marry Moabite women. That marriage, God’s people unequally yoked with people outside, brought them into Satan’s dwelling place. That is how things begin to happen. That is a literal marriage being promoted by Balaam. The people of Israel intermarried women from Canaan, and the women brought in Baal worship.

² Philippians 2:5-11.

³ Isaiah 14:13-15.

PERGAMOS

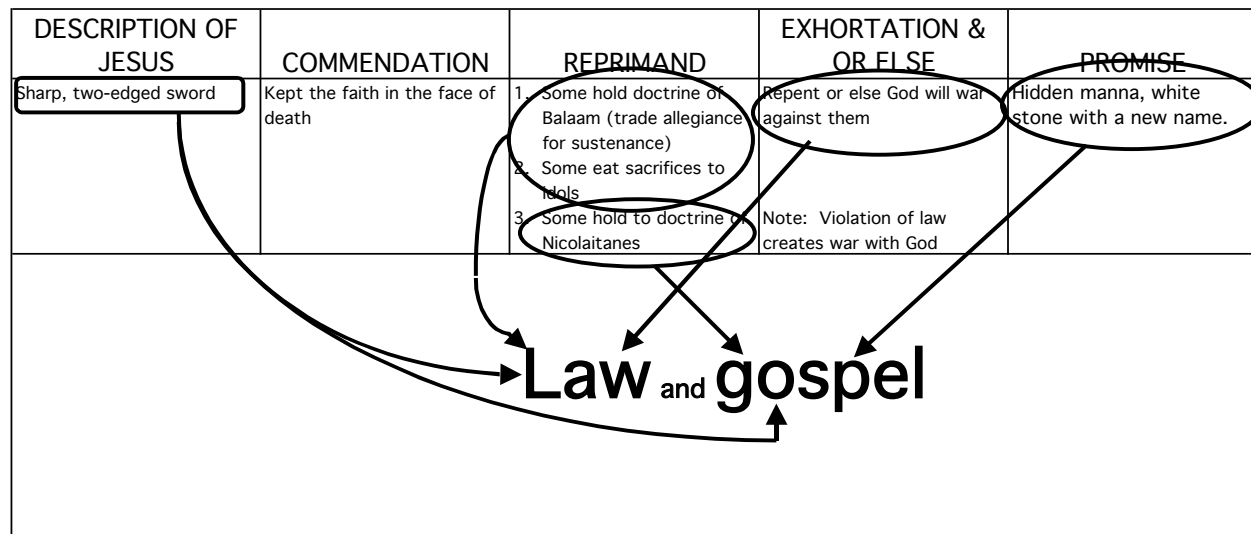


Chart 3.5

Jill: I recently heard about a church pastor wanting to allow homosexuals to join his church. Is this the kind of stuff you are talking about in being worldly?

V: If it is an attempt to be politically correct, yes. Pergamos is a Caesar-worshiping town. To worship Caesar is to ask for his blessings. That would be striving for political correctness. If the church is trying to bring in the homosexual on the basis of political correctness, then it would fit this scenario. If it is affirming homosexuality in the name of love, then it is a poor doctrine situation.

I want for you to discern where you are as an individual. Which of the spiritual churches describes you? We need to know so that we can know what we are supposed to do. What is the description of Jesus, reprimand, commendation, exhortation, and promise for you? Then when you are teaching your people, you want to convey that same thing to them. You have to get them to see. We cannot say that everybody under a given steeple or in this classroom belongs to Philadelphia. Every

church that I preach in thinks that it is Philadelphia. I have found a few Smyrna's but these other churches do not seem to exist.

Jill: Not my church, but those other churches are Laodicea (much laughter).

The Two-Edged Sword

For Pergamos (see Chart 3.5), the two-edged sword is Law and Gospel. The Law is needed for Pergamos because the church's doctrine of Balaam. The church's mercenary ministry and marriage to the world need to come under the edge of the sword in order for the church to be cut loose from the world so that it can preach the Gospel for its own sake.

Eating Sacrifices

Eating sacrifices to idols is what the people of the world did. The church people were no different. We are to be different from the world! We are a holy people! The Law edge of the sword needs to be applied to give restraint to this practice. Chop it off.

Doctrine of Nicolaitans

The doctrine of the Nicolaitans has to do with the hierarchy in the church where you have the clergy above the laity, and the clergy assuming spiritual authority over them. Nicolaitanism defeats the laity in a top-down human authority in spiritual matters. “Nico” means fight or conquer, and “laitans” means the laity.

Class, the laity is supposed to follow Jesus, too. The laity participates in the Gospel. Therefore, the Gospel edge of the sword needs to apply to this problem by freeing the people to follow Jesus.

Homer: Nicolaitanism is like the clericalism, which we studied in the Evangelism course.

V: Yes. In Church History we really get to the roots of the authority problem.

The Promise for Pergamos

The Gospel promises the hidden manna. Jesus is the Bread of Life, and He will come to you and give you strength and sustenance when your strength is failing, and you cannot go another step under your burden. Then God comes to nourish you in the form of spiritual manna, and enables you to go all the way. God did it for Polycarp. He helps you to stand in there without having to be nailed to the spire.

A white stone in my mind is a sign that is almost like two sides of a tombstone—a death side and a resurrection side. Somewhat similarly, a white stone with a new special name on it will be given to the overcomer in this church. I believe that there will be something significant about this stone with your name written on it. If you are in this church, and you come out of it and do the repentance, then there is going to be a private intimacy between God and you that nobody else is going to know.

All of the part under reprimand connects with Law except the Nicolaitanism. Nicolaitanism connects with Gospel. The two promises, hidden manna and white stone connect with Gospel.

The repentance required is to be separate from the world. The saint is to be holy, not worldly. They are to keep on doing the good part for which they received commendation. They are to discontinue the things for which they received a reprimand. If you who are in this church succeed, you will receive manna for the trial, and a new secret name written by God on a white stone. These come because of your being at war with the world. However, if you do not repent, your war will be with God. All of us are at war with either the world or with God. Some of you are on God’s side. The rest are on the world’s side. Which side are you on—really? Think!

THYATIRA

Revelation

2:18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet [are] like fine brass;

2:19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last [to be] more than the first.

2:20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

2:21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

2:22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

2:23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and

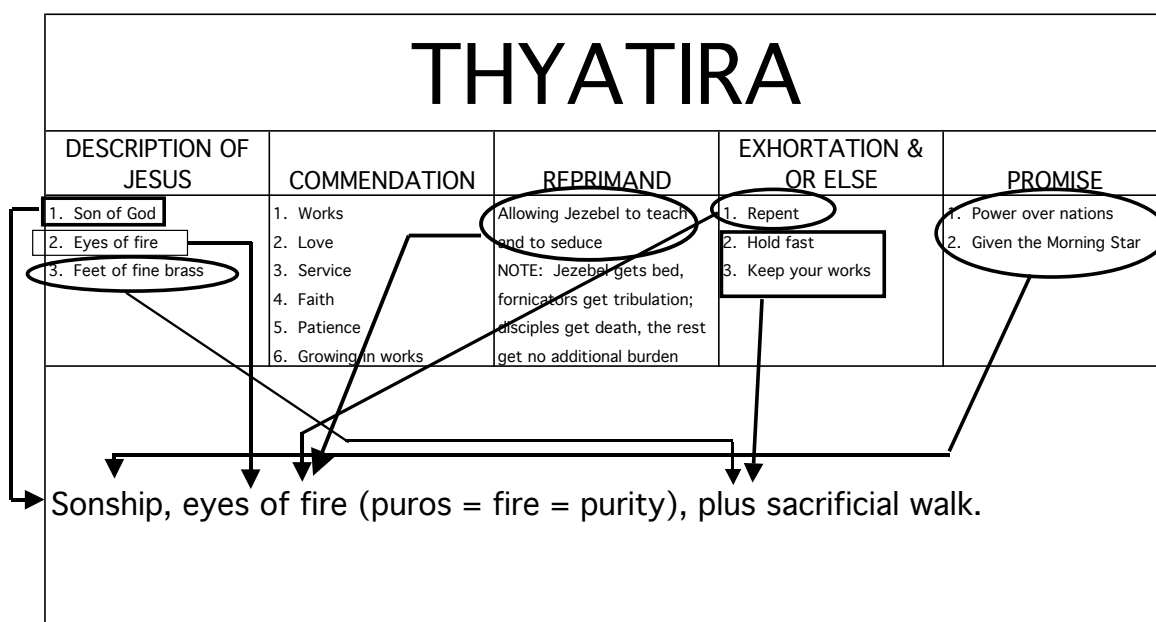


Chart 3.6

hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

2:24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

2:25 But that which ye have [already] hold fast till I come.

2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

2:27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

2:28 And I will give him the morning star.

2:29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Description of Jesus

This church is loaded down with all kinds of good and all kinds of bad, and it has some strong exhortation and some wonderful promises. The Son of God with eyes of fire and feet of fine brass I translate as follows:

<i>Element</i>	<i>Translation</i>
Son of God	Purity plus a sacrificial walk.
Eyes of fire	Purity.
Feet of fine brass	Sacrificial walk.

Commendations for Thyatira

Now this church (see Chart 3.6) has many good works of love, service, faith, and patience. You remember we talked about patience. Patience means standing under the burden. Here is this church standing under the burden and growing in works. This is a fabulous church, knocking it out, but they have some serious problems.

Reprimands for Thyatira

The first problem is that they have this Jezebel in there that is teaching and seducing the flock. Jezebel is the one that brought Baalism into Israel. Jezebel brought it in from outside by an enticement. It was imported through intermarriage where the king was a Jew and Jezebel brought in her Baal worship to Israel by marrying the king. She

gained her power to bring in heresy by being the king's wife.

Where is the power that enables Jezebel to bring in all that we have here about seducing, teaching the people to commit fornication, and eating things sacrificed to idols? A passive church that is exercising little control over its doctrine is giving power to her. That church is loopy-goopy in the name of big-tent theology. It is being loving and accepting of the sweet and loving prophetess. The church is tolerant of the prophetess, and she is busy bringing in the seduction while enjoying the limelight.

God has a severe problem with what is happening in this church. Look at the four parties: Jezebel, the fornicators, the children of that combination, and then the rest of the church. Jezebel brings in the false doctrine. Fornicators are the members of the church who open up their arms to Jezebel wanting her to teach them because they are tired of the *kenosis*: "Surely, God doesn't want us, His Own children, to endure continuous sacrifice. After all He has already done the sacrifice! We want some good doctrine that makes us feel good and able to rejoice over our salvation." Those are the fornicators.

Then there are the children, off-spring disciples of Jezebel and the fornicators. Jezebel does not get death. She brings in death, but she does not get death. The fornicators do not get death. They get tribulation. The Lord says to Jezebel, "Repent," and gave her a space of time, ten-day kind of time. He gives her a space, but she does not repent. She goes to the bed, not to the grave. The fornicators get an opportunity to check their doctrine, but they do not. They love Jezebel. The Lord gives them tribulation.

But those poor people who are bred from that relationship of Jezebel and the fornicators get death. Pastors, please do not kill your offspring who are produced by your ministry by either being a fornicator or a Jezebel!

Teach the pure doctrine. Get your people to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Jesus! Teach them! Exhort them! Give them hope! By all means warn them of what their failure will cost.

Here we have, then, the death sentence on the fruit of Jezebel and the fornicators. But the rest of the church, those who are doing these works with love, faith, patience and growing in works, what do they get? They get no additional burden. They are the saints who are doing all the good part here. In the eyes of the congregation, they do not appear to be doing the good part. It is the fornicators who appear to be doing the good part. But the fornicators, Jezebel, and their children are looking with temporal eyes, the eyes of flesh. You have to look with spiritual eyes, and only then, you can perceive what is good.

Exhortations for Thyatira

Then He says, "You must repent and hold fast and keep your works." Quit fornicating with idols! Get over with the group that is doing the works, hold fast to good doctrine and keep doing your works. If you will do these things, Jesus promises to give you power over the nations. That is reigning power. If you exercise resistance in the church and stand against Jezebel and the fornicators which are going to be most likely the majority of the church, and if you stand against that evil in the church by assuming a position of leadership in the church to move it in the right path, then in eternity, He will give you a position of leadership to run the nations the way they are supposed to be run.

Joe: The Presbyterians recently voted to allow the gay and lesbians to hold church posts. The laity stood against it.

V: Now that is a denominational example. But to see our individual role, we really need to get down to a smaller group so that we can see where we fit into this scenario as well. It would be easy to escape by standing

in self-righteousness and saying, “Thyatira is over there in that denomination.”

Ted: A good example of this sin could be Christian narcissism of today that says you do not have to deny yourself, you are a child of Abraham. You should receive Abraham’s blessing and live the good life.

V: Exactly. I am not sure that level of error would create dead children, but it is leaning in the right direction.

Wanda: Jezebel here is one that compromises the truth. In other words she is watering it down to fit her own agenda and the itching ears of these other people.

V: That is right, and she has fornicators that are buying into her teachings for various reasons. One is they want to be seen as accepting of the prophetess herself, and another is that they actually enjoy her doctrines. The fornicators, you see, are the majority of the church population because otherwise they would reject the false doctrine.

Jezebel is just one. It just takes one to bring in a false seed. It takes a lot of fornicators out there to grab that seed and say, “Yes, let us go with this.” Jezebel provides the seed, and the fornicators sow that seed (planting tares in the wheat field). Then, those that are the offspring from that false doctrine are stillborn. That, of course, is the tragedy, i.e. those not participating in the process are the victims of the process.

Wanda: This bed that Jezebel is going to, that is like uselessness in heaven, right?

V: That is what I think; they will be set aside for eternal uselessness. The teachers of false doctrine have proven themselves to be unreliable to live and teach the Truth. Therefore, God will not trust you with anything in heaven. You do not even get a chance to come into the conferences when the King calls a conference, “All my workers

come in. You bed-layers stay out there in your beds.”

Carl: That would be outside?

V: Outside the wall. We will talk all about that when we get there. We have some exciting stuff to go through.

Joe: The watchman certainly comes into my mind here.

V: That is good, Joe! We need watchmen.⁴ Isaiah speaks of the watchmen on the wall, watching for the enemy and sounding a sure and certain alarm when the enemy is coming in. If you have a crack in the wall, you should sound the alarm and take immediate action to seal the crack so that your life-preserving defenses are in place. Where are the watchmen? You are the watchmen! The enemy is Jezebel and her death-dealing false doctrine.

Oscar: Becoming antichrist, then, is being politically correct and teaching a pseudo-salvation.

V: Yes. We have in church history this concept in which the church becomes so perverted that what they call salvation is not salvation. This kind of perversion brings us to Thyatira, the big turn on Chart 3.7. God is trying to show us here is that we get to this Antichrist position through all the turns. Here in these seven churches are some of the turns.

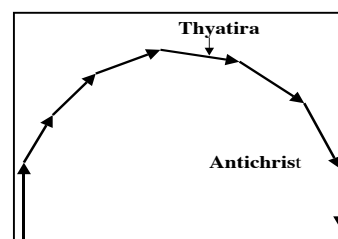


Chart 3.7

Now I think that in all of these churches there are saved people because some of these people believe enough to die for their faith. Where is our church? Are there saved people in our churches? Are you and I saved? Will

⁴ Ezekiel 3:17 and 33:1-7.

we die for our faith? As bad as some of these churches get, they contain people who are dying for their faith. We have to give them some credit here, but this credit is exemplary of the attitude and the status of the individual Christian alone.

You need to evaluate where you are—if you have an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. I want to hear everything that He is saying to the churches. If I have seed of Jezebel in me, I want it rooted out. If I am a fornicator and cheering on fornication, I have to get that out, too. But if I am one of the rest of these, then I have to hold fast, repent, and keep those works going. That means that I am to hold that burden up, keep those works going. I may not look pretty doing it, but I am going to go on all the way. I want every one of you to go, too.

Promise

Part of the promise is to be given the Morning Star. Jesus is the Morning Star. To be given Jesus is to receive His heritage. This means you will share in His running of the

universe. What an awesome privilege! You will be given the authority and power to actually rule some of the nations.

“Promise” goes to Sonship, “repent” goes to purity, and “hold fast and keep works” goes to sacrificial walk (Chart 3.6).

REVELATION 3 SARDIS

Revelation

3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

3:4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be

SARDIS

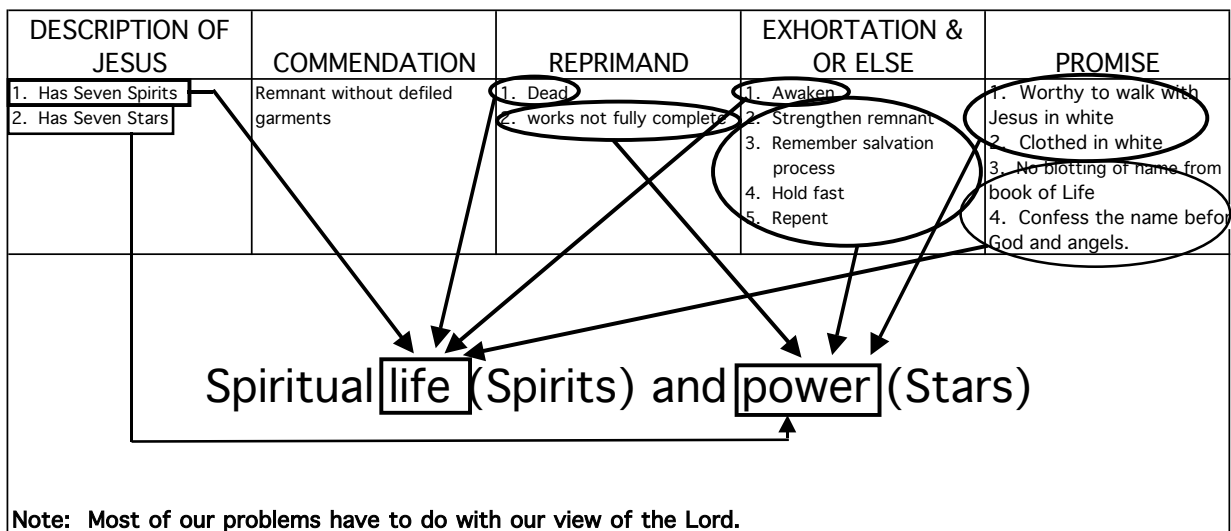


Chart 3.8

clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

3:6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Description of Jesus

In Sardis' interpretation of Jesus, I put down here that it is spiritual life and power (See Chart 3.8).

Commendation and Reprimand

A small remnant is commended for not having defiled their garments. However, the Lord has declared that the church is dead. How would you like to be seen as dead? That is a hard reprimand, and their works are not full and complete. There are a few things that still have a pulse, but they are ready to die.

Seven means all. Thus the seven spirits means the Holy Spirit. The seven stars means then all of the angels. The function of the angel is primarily to be a messenger. Bringing these two descriptions together, I see that God gives you life through the Holy Spirit and provides messenger power through the angels.

Exhortation for Sardis

The exhortation is "awaken" (that means be watchful, be alert, get your watchman on the wall), strengthen the remnant, remember the salvation process, hold fast, and repent. There are five statements in exhortation.

Remember the salvation process. Salvation is pictured like this in Chart 3.9: Justifi-

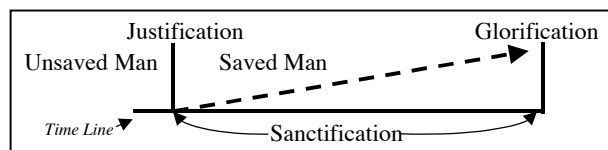


Chart 3.9

cation is the new birth. You go through

justification. The rest of your life process is called sanctification, and then you go to glorification. It is a larger model than is typically bantered about in our churches today.

Salvation in churches today has become a punctiliar salvation, a dot salvation (see Chart 3.10). You go through justification and no other responsibility is expected of you. You have it, or you do not have it. If you have it, it is over with, just cool it. This punctiliar salvation describes a dead Christian.

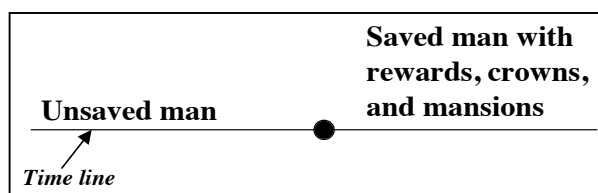


Chart 3.10

If this dot is your sanctification, your faith is dead because this is only a picture of ontological salvation. There is no process, function, or ministry. The "unto good works" that is in salvation is missing in punctiliar salvation.

Ephesians describes the process as awake, arise and walk?⁵ Justification is the beginning, the door. Once you walk through the door, you have your whole life to live, and it is very challenging. He is saying, wake up, get in there and do all these five things: awaken, strengthen the remnant, remember the process, hold fast to it, and repent.

Sardis is a punctiliar church, very much like the majority of our churches today. You walk the aisle, and it is over with. All you have to do is just maintain "nickels and noses" from that point on. You come to church, sit down when everybody else sits, stand when everybody stands up, sing when everybody sings, sit back down, stand up, and that is it. You go home, come back and do

⁵ Ephesians 5:14-15.

that again. If you can stand up at the right time, sit down at the right time, and put money in the plate, how do you improve on that?

Sanctification is the process of holiness, the same thing. It means to be made holy at justification, but that is an ontological holiness. There follows a process of behavioral holiness. There is still a holy life that needs to be lived profitably for God. Holiness means to be set aside for God's Own use. How is He going to use you? Are you going to walk and do your works on His path (see Chart 3.11). He draws the path and says, Get on this path and follow my Son and *do what He says*.

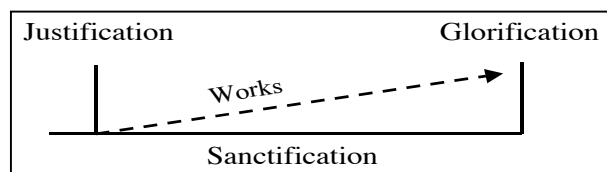


Chart 3.11

Jill: Sanctification is for you to utilize your spiritual gifts.

V: Yes, and everything else that you have in a self-denial process of living out your life in sacrifice just like Jesus did.

Jill: Will you explain to us the “I will not blot out his name”?

V: It is the same thing as the double negative that we had a while ago in one of the other churches. There is not a chance under heaven of blotting your name out. The question arises in my mind, does that mean that every person's name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life and then blotted out when you reject Jesus?

Paul: I think it is.

V: What about your children?

Pete: I think it is saying that once your name is in the Book of Life, it cannot be blotted out.

V: What if children are born with their names in the Lamb's Book of Life?

Oscar: God knows what you are going to do before you are born, before you have lived your life, and before your death. But once your name is in the Book of Life, it is not coming out. So if God has put your name in the Book of Life, it is there to stay.

V: And that is a good opinion, but it is only an opinion. We all have an opinion. Where there is a multitude of Christians you are going to have a multitude of opinions. But the thing is, is the Lamb's Book of Life equivalent to eternal life? It may not be. Jesus died for everybody. One option could be that He had everybody's name put in there. Then when you reject Him, it is taken out. Another option could be that it comes out at the age of accountability, and it is added when you get saved. The third option is that the name is never in the book until you get saved. This third option presents a problem with how the book works in relation with babies who die before they are saved.

Promises for Sardis

The promise is to be worthy to walk with Jesus in white. When we get to the end of the book, we are going to have to deal with the issue of self-indulgence. There are going to be some naked people in heaven. Please do not be naked. I want all of you to be worthy to walk in heaven with Jesus in white clothes. Overcome punctiliar salvation! Walk your path of sanctification. Get your people to overcome too. If you can get on God's path and follow Jesus, under the burden through self-denial, on the path of holiness, then you will be worthy to walk with Jesus in clothes of white.

The first promise is to walk with Jesus. The second promise is “clothed in white,” and number three is “no blotting out.” Number four: “He will confess your name before God

and the angels.” I want Him to confess my name before the Father and the angels.

The “dead” part should have an arrow down to life and sounder“ works” point to power. The “awaken” part of exhortation points down to life. Numbers 2, 3, 4 and 5 under exhortation point over to power. The first two promises go to power. The last two promises go to life.

Sardis has a lot of stuff going on in it. The more arrows there are, the more teaching there is for the church. Look at the complexities; the teaching for Sardis is because of the dot salvation and lack of life. Without the sanctification process there is not much there. Sanctification is the difference between life and death for Christians’ faith.

PHILADELPHIA

Revelation

3:7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, [which is] new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and [I will write upon him] my new name.

3:13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Even Jesus received a new name, and He is going to write that name on the Philadelphia saints.

PHILADELPHIA

DESCRIPTION OF JESUS	COMMENDATION	REPRIMAND	EXHORTATION & OR ELSE	PROMISE
1. Holy 2. True 3. Has the key (shuts and opens).	1. Works 2. Open door 3. Has little strength 4. Kept his Word 5. Not denied His name NOTES: a. False sons of God will worship before their feet. b. Know God has loved them. c. They will be kept from the hour of temptation	None	Hold fast so that crown is not taken	1. Pillar in God's temple not to go out. 2. God's name, name of City of God, and Jesus' new name written on them.
Transcendent and moral, integrity of life and ministry, plus power (to shut and open)				

Chart 3.12

Description of Jesus

My interpretation of the description is transcendence plus moral integrity of life and ministry plus power (see Chart 3.12). Holy has two parts in its definition.

1. It means to be set aside or transcendent. You have been set aside for the Lord's purpose. That is what transcendent means (See chart 3.13).

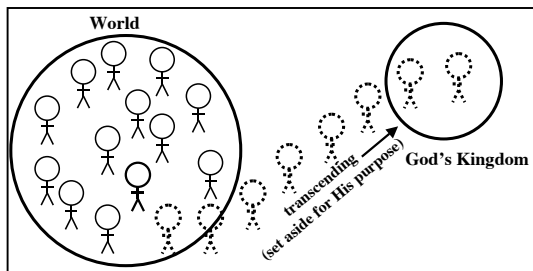


Chart 3.13

Ecclesia means the called out ones. When you accept His offer of salvation, He reaches into the world, gets you, and puts you in His part of the Kingdom. That is to be transcendent. He pulls you away from and out of the world. You are no longer dwelling in the world. You are dwelling in His kingdom, and you are there for His purpose.

2. It also means that you are going to be moral. Morality is part two of holiness.

When we see Jesus described as holy, then it means transcendent and morally righteous. Jesus was set aside for the Father's use, and He was absolutely moral. Since you are in God's Kingdom, you, too, are to behave morally. That means you do not do the "thou shalt nots," but it also means that you do the "thou shalts." Whatever He says, you do it. That means moral.

Being set aside for His use means that while you are being moral, you are looking at the Lord, and when He says to follow Him, you get up and go. You keep on being transcendent, a pilgrim, and you keep on being moral. You follow Him wherever He

goes. Since He says to pick up your cross, you pick it up. Since He says to deny yourself, you deny yourself. You go after him.

He came and demonstrated His path. He is on His same path right now through you. The path of sacrifice is the *kenosis*. You must make sure that you are in line with Him, following Him, not following your own ideas.

Commendation

Jesus says that they had their works, an open door, and a little strength. I like the way He says a "little" strength. This church has a ton of strength, but when you look at it from the Lord's perception, it is a little strength. They are keeping His Word, and they have not denied His name. These are good commendations for them and all without a reprimand.

Exhortation for Philadelphia

There is, though, an exhortation. You must hang on to your crown or you are going to lose it. This class may say, "Yes, this is what I know. I am going to follow the Lord in self-denial. I am going to do it just like He did it." You take off following Him. You follow, you follow, you follow. You come to the cross, and it is a burning cross. You look at it. You do not look with the eyes of faith by looking across the chasm to the exaltation of the glorification. You look within the ten days. You look at that burning cross, and you fear the pain. You consider what they say, "All you have to do is recant your faith in Christ, and you will live."

If you have not settled it within your heart like we talked about last week, you may look at the cross and the fire and start thinking how much that fire is going to burn. If that should happen, you may not be able to say like Polycarp said that the fire burns only for an hour, but you will not be in the fire that burns for eternity. You may not be able to do that if you are looking within the ten days because

you cannot see eternity when you are inside the ten days of temporality. Then you could deny your faith in order to get out of burning.

Where is your crown? It is gone. Hold fast! Hang on to your crown. Go for the gold. Go all the way. Settle it in your heart. Deny yourself. Have it in your mind that you are going to laugh at death just like Polycarp.

Polycarp was ready when he went to the stadium. When you are ready, and it is settled in your mind, you are going to have Polycarp's kind of strength come upon you and hear the voice from heaven that says, "Be the man, Polycarp." If you are going to your death, would you not like to hear a voice from heaven that says, "Be the man for me." You can have it. Hang in there. Get tough.

Questions for Chapter 3

On separate paper draw a chart for each of the five churches discussed in this chapter. A form is given for you to follow. Be sure to include all the items in each block including the bottom block. Draw arrows from the elements to the descriptive words in the bottom block.

CHURCH NAME

DESCRIPTION OF JESUS	COMMENDATION	REPRIMAND	EXHORTATION & OR ELSE	PROMISE

Chapter 4 WORSHIP IN HEAVEN

LAODICEA

Revelation

3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

3:15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and [that] the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

3:22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Laodicea on the Map

Here is Laodicea, the last church, the one at the bottom (see Charts 3.2 & 3.3 in the prior chapter). We have gone around the top. We have come back now. This is the bottom most church. It is a wealthy church. It has all the makings of success, and yet they are not very successful. By human measurements and with the human eye and perception, it

looks like this church is a good and very prosperous church and has need of nothing. They have no problems; everything that they tackle they conquer.

Laodicea is not like Smyrna who is being persecuted unto death. This is a church that has no persecution. All God has to say about this church is bad. There is not one good thing that God says about this church. God does not look with the same kind of view as we do. He says that he knows this church's works.

Two Judgments for Christians

Here is the thing about our Christianity. It is made up of two parts: one part is your personhood, and the other part is your works. You are going to be judged on both things. It is your personhood that takes you to heaven. That judgment on personhood is where you are decreed as righteous and that is what gets you into heaven. But there is something else that is going to be judged, and that is going to be your works. God is not a respecter of persons.¹ He is going to judge your works just as He is going to judge the works of the evil people who are going to go to the lake of fire. We are going to stand, then, another judgment, every one of us.

Just because you have been given a washed personhood does not mean that the Lord is proud of you. He is looking for you to step up to where you are supposed to be and walk the walk that He has before you. If you do walk that walk, it will not be the kind that is rich, increased with goods, and having it made like Laodicea. It is going to be hell on earth, tribulation, suffering, self-denial and

¹ Acts 10:34.

sacrifice. If you cannot do that, then Laodicea is your church. If you can do that, there will be some crowns and some rewards that you will be given.

He is calling for us, then, to step up, to do something here. He says, when He looks at you, I know your works, just like He says in all of these churches. I know your works. He not only knows you, He also knows your works. He is looking at our works, they are going to be judged, and we are going to be required to give an account of our stewardship of our time, our opportunities, and what we do with the gifts that He has given to us. “To whom much is given, much is required.”² He has given you much. What are you going to do with what He has given you?

I almost want to jump over there into Matthew and tell you about the three stewards there.³ One steward just saved his talent/gift, kept it clean, tucked it away, even buried it so nobody could get it. When the time of judgment came he brought that talent/gift back. It was unused, it was still brand, spanking new, and he said, “Here is what you gave me. I give it back to you.” God said, “You disobedient, sluggardly, unfaithful steward.”

There are some folks who are going to have even less than that steward because they sully their gifts and their opportunities. Instead of using them for God or not using them at all, they use them for the devil. This guy did not use his for the devil, all he did was just make sure it was unsullied, and brought it back intact to the Lord.

We are going to be accountable for everything that we have been given. All the opportunities, everything that we are, and everything that we have are entrusted to us by God to bring profit to His Kingdom. If we have material goods, we are to use those material goods to bring profit to God. You

have a healthy body? use that healthy body! If you have a network in place, use that network. If you have the birthright in a free country, use that birthright. If you have the gift of gab, use that gift. If you have the ability to meet people and never meet a stranger, use that ability. If you have a bold witness, use that bold witness. If you have a pulpit, use that pulpit, not for yourself—none of this is for yourself, but all is for the Kingdom, for Jesus.

The church of Laodicea is basking in its earthly glory, and its members have need of nothing. However, God says that they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

Works Purchase Clothes

Clothes come with works. Understand that. Cleansing of your body comes at justification because when you get saved you are cleaned up. Your personhood is clean. It is your job to put on some clothes. It is your job to earn a crown, to add to your attraction.

We have a church today that thinks that everybody is going to have crowns, mansions, and beautiful clothes through eternity. Where we are getting this idea from I cannot figure out. We think that we are going to be involved in all the big councils when the Lord calls a council. If a Christian is not doing anything now, what makes him think that he is going to be involved in a council of the inner circle?

This nakedness is something I want you to be afraid of. I want you to go into heaven not ashamed and come out of the judgment of works with clothes.

Your salvation is not just a private possession. Salvation is unto good works of ministry. By our works, we earn His trust. What is our track record? Is it self-indulgence? Then do not expect to be given more to be used in His Kingdom if you are going to use it for yourself.

² Luke 12:48.

³ Matthew 25:15-28.

Beth: I think that part of the reason why people want all the benefits but do not want any of the responsibilities of salvation is that they are used to doing things in a worldly way. They assign worldly attributes to God like giving Him Santa Claus attributes.

V: Yes, we sit on His lap in prayer and tell Him what we want.

Reprimands and Exhortations for Laodicea

I need for you to look at your Laodicea Chart 4.1. On the reprimand he has lukewarm, wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. On the exhortation he says, "Since you are this, why not buy some gold tried in the fire." Gold equals faith, and faith that is not tried is seed faith. Faith tried in the fire is a true faith, a faith that holds up through the fire, through your walk, through tribulations to see what you are going to do when you encounter those difficulties. Real faith is when it comes through the other side, and it is still intact. That is the real faith. Any other faith will just be consumed in an instant when it meets the fire.

Jerry is going to his judgment, and the Lord is going to say, "All right, what have you got?" Jerry is going to bring his big pile of works up there and say, "Here they are, Lord, I have them for you." Since they have not been tested by fire⁴ during Jerry's life of ease, the Lord is going to pass that fire under them, and they are going to poof up in smoke.

What is buying gold tried in the fire? How do you buy something? You give something, and then you get something. That is buying. How do you buy gold tried in the fire? You give your life, you sacrifice your life, and if you cannot deny yourself and pick up your cross and go to the sacrifice, you are not buying any true faith. *Kenosis* in real discipleship is how you buy gold tried in the fire.

Start denying yourself on the little things. Sacrifice now so that when the time comes, these little sacrifices will have built some muscle in you so that you can pass the bigger tests. If you do not go to boot camp, do not expect to fight the war. Get in there, practice, and run until you hurt. Keep on pressing on.

LAODICEA

DESCRIPTION OF JESUS	COMMENDATION	REPRIMAND	EXHORTATION & OR ELSE	PROMISE
1. Amen 2. Faithful and True Witness 3. Creator	None	1. Lukewarm 2. Wretched 3. Miserable 4. Poor 5. Blind 6. Naked	1. Buy gold tried in fire. 2. Buy white clothes 3. Anoint eyes with eye salve 4. Be zealous to repent. Temporal promise: I will come into fellowship.	Sit with Christ in His throne. Question: Why such a high promise?
The very One is the faithful and true Witness and the Creator				
NOTES: Buy = sacrifice Gold = sacrificial faith White clothes = faithfulness, persevering faith in works Repent = more than a willing spirit, means pursuing repentance, to run after repentance Rebuke and chastening results from love.				

Chart 4.1

⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:13-15.

The Lord will take you just about where you think you cannot go another step, then He eases off. He takes you to the breaking point again, then He eases off. He takes you to the breaking point again, and then He eases off. The next thing you know, you will hear somebody say, "I have watched that guy mature." You yourself will not be able to see it, but the people around you can. The Lord is going to repeatedly take you to the breaking point and then taper off. His plan is to grow you to your maximum.

Bob: If we drop below our path, does that mean we cannot get back on path?

V: Sometimes, yes, sometimes, no. God makes the determination because sometimes opportunities are forever lost, and you cannot recapture those opportunities. God is the one in charge of marking out a new path for you or moving you back on the original path. You just take the best opportunity you are given and have at it. Just remember, you have only one time at bat. Do not let the pitches go by. Swing!

None of us want to have the description that Laodicea is being given. If, however, you are a Laodicean, then you have to turn around from indulgence, pride, and self-centeredness and go against the grain by practicing the *kenosis* of true discipleship.

Buying Clothes

The second thing He tells them to do is buy some white clothes. Buying some white clothes is going to take some work because work is how you get clothes. The buying of faith takes sacrifice. The buying of clothes takes some work, so as you begin to work and minister sacrificially, you are buying both gold and clothes of white.

He exhorts us to buy some clothes so that we will be clothed, and we will not receive the shame of nakedness that appears at the judgment of works. And, folks, I am telling

you that this is a horrifying thought. There are many saints who do not understand this. They think salvation is only about personhood, and that it has nothing to do with your works. But works has a ton to do with salvation. You are born again as a free gift, but from that point on, folks, it is sacrificial, self-denying kind of work, i.e. the *kenosis*. You must teach your people this truth because I find that the greatest ignorance across the board is in this area right here.

I want you to know that you are going to lose your rewards if you do not tell your people. There is accountability for you and for them. You have the knowledge because I have explained it to you, and if you have had my Systematic Theology, you are slam totally accountable. It is incumbent and imperative that you teach your people about their accountability.

Jill: I think that God does not send revival to our churches because we have the attitude that we do not have to do anything.

V: That is a perception that I find across the board, everywhere I go. It is prevalent. There are pockets of understanding that are scattered around, but what I see is that they are afraid to teach it, to teach their people to get on out there and follow the Lord.

Look at the various ministries. What is our seniors' ministry? It is entertaining and indulging our seniors. The greatest available work force in God's army is the seniors. There are literally millions of them. But, instead of them being taught and trained for ministry, they are being coddled, indulged, and entertained by spending additional resources on them. We take them on trips, hold parties for them, and generally keep them idle. What is our youth ministry? What is our young-marrieds ministry? (Etc., etc.)

Tim: When I have brought this up to my members, the usual response is that heaven is

going to be a good place, and their just being there is good enough.

V: And that, I'm sorry to say, is something that I have heard in every church that I have been in. It is everywhere. The brainwashing of going to heaven, not pleasing the Lord, has been effectual, and it is in place. You have to go against the tide. Every one of you must push against the tide and get this message out!

There is an overemphasis of the Lord's part in salvation, and you wonder how can you overemphasize the Lord's part in the doctrine of salvation when He did it all? The answer is by underestimating your responsibility in having such a precious gift.

Works Must Be Worthy

When the Titanic sank, there were people that gave up their seat in a lifeboat for someone else. If you had given your seat to someone, you would expect that person to at least be grateful and lead a decent life. But if that person took your seat and then squandered his life, your disappointment would be severe. Well, Jesus died so that you might live. His expectation is that you live profitably for Him because it cost Him dearly. We need to be responsible.

When it comes to salvation, do not just kick back and say, Jesus did it all, sing praises to Him, and then when there is work to be done, you say, "Oh, Lord, come do this over here." He says, "I am sending you; as my Father sent me, so send I you."⁵ When we de-emphasize or underemphasize our accountability for that precious gift, our praises to Him turn into spittle.

Jesus is counting on you to live that life. Get in there and do something with what He gave you. He entrusted you with life, gifts, opportunities, network, the whole thing, and

you are kicking back and saying, "Jesus did it all." The book of Acts was written to show the continuing work of Jesus Christ **through** the church.

Pete: Our churches do not know this. We sing the hymn, *Jesus Paid It All*.⁶ The deception that has been unleashed by the enemy has made our people complacent. They do not know the truth that sets them free, and we are sitting there just lulling ourselves into a . . .

V: . . . a stupor called ecstasy. Jeremiah called it drunkenness.⁷

Pete: You are exactly right. People are going to stand before the Lord, and they are going to be naked. They are not going to have the mansion on the hill. They are going to be stuck somewhere else, and they will say, "Man, I never envisioned this." If we do not tell people, we are responsible.

V: Absolutely, that is where we are, right there . . . responsible.

Mary: The Lord right now is sending a wake-up call to Christians. It is time that you pastors and we teachers preach and teach it.

Tom: I have never seen this before tonight, but everybody gets the same warning in Revelation 16:15, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Wake Up

V: This is a wake-up call for us. You are the people who have been chosen to carry the message. Please do not fail in this. Take this message out there and hammer it until they are threatening to lynch you. You hammer that message out there. Talk about their responsibility in the sanctification part of salvation every time you are preaching or

⁵ John 20:21.

⁶ *Jesus Paid It All*, words by Elvina M. Hall. 1865.

⁷ Jeremiah 13:13

teaching. Get this message in. The quality of your people's lives is at stake.

Ted: The deception is that salvation is free. Justification and glorification are free, but sanctification involves works. Our members do not understand the doctrine of salvation. It is a dot to them rather than a process. They do not realize that we are all responsible for using our blessings to benefit others. Yes, salvation's justification is free, but without works our faith is dead.

V: Right, so you have to go against the grain. Many of you have been fooled into thinking that if it is uncomfortable, it is not of God's will. **NO!** Denying self, taking up the Lord's cross, and following Jesus **IS UNCOMFORTABLE!** So, do not shrink from the task when you meet resistance.

Joe: I preached on this once and did not think it was that strong a message, but the growth our little church got from it indicates otherwise. If you really stand on the Word and give the people what the Lord wants them to hear, there will be fruit.

V: Yes, but you also receive persecution. When it breaks out, do not let that deter you. Hang in there and go the distance.

Betty: It reminds me that the Lord commanded us to work out our salvation in fear and trembling.⁸ The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.⁹

Oscar: Why do the churches today not teach Revelation? It needs to be taught, and people need a healthy fear of God.

V: Because the Lord's slaves are so rare, it cannot be understood. Revelation is nonsense to a non-slave.

⁸ Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

⁹ Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom . . .

[Homer stands up, red-faced and breathing fast. His hand is raised and he is about to start talking. He is obviously emotional over the issue being discussed.]

V: Now sit down, Homer, you are not going to preach it here. Preach it at your church. [Homer slowly sits down in the midst of much clapping and cheering and laughing.]

I must warn you that political correctness is going to deteriorate to the point where you are going to be required to do something that you cannot do. When that happens, you and your people are going to be faced with going against your conscience or going to prison or to death. We are going to see that future dilemma in our study of this book. You need to clearly understand that. If you do not work to impede this leftward slide down into oblivion and get your people to be alert to do the same, then my friend, you will have failed the Lord in your responsibilities. If you love your people and your own families, do something now before it is too late.

Eye Salve

"Anoint your eyes with eye salve." This anointing is from faithfulness. When you begin to be faithful, you will have the understanding that comes with it. John 7:17 gives you a promise that if you will do the truth, you will know the right doctrine.¹⁰ But if you know it, and you do not do it, you will not know right doctrine. If you want some eye salve, do what it is that you know. If you do what you know, there will be an additional vision with which you will be able to see more clearly, and you will grow in your knowledge as long as you do what you know. The minute you stop doing what you know, then your knowledge is going to become perverted.

¹⁰ John 7:17 If a man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or [whether] I speak of myself.

The reason we have a doctrinal immaturity in our churches today is because the churches are not practicing even the little things that they know. If I had my “druthers” as a pastor, I would teach one New Testament commandment until every member did it. Then I would add another. I would encourage everybody to be accountable to the Lord for their own ministries. When everybody works, knowledge of the truth will skyrocket.

Knowing the truth depends upon doing it (John 7:17). Just mark it down. The Spirit says to this church, to you, to anoint your eyes with eye salve. Do what you know (John 7:17) is how you anoint your eyes.

God is not mincing His Words, and He is giving straight up and down exhortation to us to be faithful to do what we know. He says in verse 19 that the reason for His hard Words is because He loves us.

Revelation

3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

God’s love is His reason for chastening, and it is also the reason that we should be zealous. We should run to repentance and not let anything stop us from achieving that repentance.

Have you ever experienced giving a child discipline and have him say to you, “I hate you. I hate you.” The parent wants the best for that child, and the child says, “I hate you.” Well, the child has a choice. He can either be a zealot or run to repentance, or say, “I hate you.” You have the same choice with God. Which one do you want to do? “I hate you,” or run, bend the neck and the knee to repentance. Be stiff-necked and holler out: “I hate you.” or bend the neck and the knee and yield. It is your choice. If you will yield your will to God, do it right now. Pray to God and repent of the specific thing that the Holy Spirit is pointing at. Confess it, turn from it, and follow Jesus in the *kenosis*.

Promise for Laodicea

It seems to me that getting to sit with Jesus in His throne is the highest promise of all the seven churches. Why do you think that He offers such a high promise for overcoming to this kind of church?

Joe: In this church it would be the hardest thing to do.

V: There you go. It will be the most difficult to stand up and go against the tide of this church because they have all the human evidence, and all of it is on their side. You have nothing except the spiritual evidence. Your voice is going to tell them to throw everything away and go to the *kenosis*. You will be criticized unmercifully. They have evidence that their way is working. They have the growing church. The physical plant is tops, everything is going their way, and here you are saying, “Repent!”

It is the most difficult church situation. If you overcome, you will receive the highest promise—to sit with the Lord in His throne. “If you have an ear, then hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

Joe: The present-day church would be the church of Laodicea.

V: No. All seven are present.

REVELATION 4

Heaven

Revelation

4:1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

4:2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and [one] sat on the throne.

4:3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and [there

was] a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

The scene is in heaven, and God the Father is sitting on the throne.

Joe: What is the sea of glass that was in front of the holy place?

The Sea and Water

V: We are about to get to that. We have not read that part yet. But let me tell you what my interpretations are of the signs. Waters are religions. Sea is Christian religion and its people, and the fresh waters, the rivers, are the clergy and leaders of the church. You are fresh water. You are part of the fresh water, and your people are part of the sea.

So when you see “many waters,” then it is going to be not just Christianity, but a lot of different kinds of religions. When you see the water coming from Satan, it is going to be a false religion, and it will consume the people.

SIGN	MEANING
Water	Religion
Fresh waters	Clergy and leaders of the church
Many waters	All different kinds of religions
Water from Satan	False religion
Sea	Christian religion or all of the church
Crystal sea	The refined and glorified church

The crystal sea is the refined and glorified church. There will not be any impurities in these saints who make up the crystal sea, and it is going to be completely clear. You can see right through it. There will not be any impurities, no mask, no agendas, no guile—a pure, crystal sea.

Revelation

4:4 And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I

saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; . . .

Catch that white raiment; these guys have been doing some work.

Revelation

4:4 . . . and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Crowns

Now a good student brought me a paper years ago on crowns, five crowns. It would be good to preach a series of sermons on white clothes and the crowns.

Crown of Life	Rev. 2:10	Being faithful unto death.
Crown of Glory	1 Peter 5:4	Being a faithful leader in the church. That means you have to go against the tide. If you will do that, you will receive the crown of glory.
Crown of Rejoicing	Dan 12:3	Eternal rejoicing is the reward for leading others into righteousness.
Incorruptible Crown	1 Cor. 9:25	To those who can bring themselves under control. When you can say “No” to yourself, when you can make yourself go where you do not want to go.
Crown of Righteousness	2 Tim. 4:8	This is the crown for the person who has been righteous in his behavior straight through, and he does not fear the Lord’s coming.

Twenty-four Elders

Twenty-four elders are sitting in twenty-four seats around the throne of God. They all have on white clothes, and they all have on crowns. What I think is that there are twelve representing the tribes of Israel and then twelve representing the twelve apostles. I tend to think that the number 12 is a significant number just as ten and seven are. My problem is that I have not figured out what it means. Certainly, there could be just twenty-four, but I think that the number of thrones may possibly exceed that.

The interesting thing is that the apostle John was escorted into heaven. He is standing there, and he sees that there are twenty-four of these guys. He sees that they are wearing white clothes and a crown. He does not even recognize himself. He looks at these people, and he either does not recognize himself, or he does not see himself.

Now, that lack of self-recognition poses this question: If these positions are earned, then you could be one of them. Either you or someone in the church could be one of them, or John cannot recognize himself in the glorified state. If John is not one of them, then some Christian exceeded John in his faithful, sacrificial works. You pay your dollar, and take your pick.

Ted: If there are already twenty-four of them there . . .

V: No. This scene is the future. You see, John has been pulled up to see the glorified church. His year is AD 98. He is snatched up and moved to the future. This scene is future to us!

Ted: It has not happened yet?

V: It has not happened yet. John is looking at something that he is going to see again.

Pete: Lack of recognition makes sense because when Jesus was resurrected, Mary

did not recognize who He was. Also the two walking on the road to Emmaus did not recognize who He was because He was in His glorified body.

V: If twenty-four is an actual number rather than a significant number, then the twenty-four best runners in the sanctification race are going to be these twenty-four guys who will have the opportunity to cast their crowns at the Lord's feet.

Sybil: The voice told John to write the things that will happen.

V: Yes. This scene is future to him, and so anyway he is pulled up out of time back at AD 98, transported into the future, and shown this scene. After seeing this future scene, John is going to be put back down into his present time of AD 98 again.

That scene was in *kairos* time, not in *chronos*. Once John was taken into heaven, he was in a new kind of time, vertical time, but in John's perception, it was present time.

Revelation

4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Seven Lamps

This is an interesting thing that is happening here. The Holy Spirit is going to be described as lamps in this case, and as eyes in another case. So it appears to me that whenever you come up with the seven something's to describe the Holy Spirit, like the seven Spirits, the seven lamps, and the seven eyes, it points out that in order to understand something of the Holy Spirit, more than just one kind of figure is needed.

Pete: Is that what Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12—the several spirits? The Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of giving, but they all come from the same Spirit.

V: Yes, when we are dealing with the number seven, it is universal and extends past time into eternity. When you are dealing with the number ten, it is temporally universal. It stops at the end of time, the temporal version of the whole thing.

The Holy Spirit gives light as a lamp. There is no seeing the truth except from divine light. If you have had my *Systematic Theology*, then you will know about illumination.

The burning fire gives purification. Fire in Greek is *puros*. *Puros* is given to our actions via conviction. Thus, the Holy Spirit gives illumination and purification.

Apart from the work of the Spirit, the things of God are foolishness. We cannot understand. We have to be lifted up to understand, because the human mind is down here, and for the human mind to understand something divine, it has to be lifted up.

A good example of *puros* understanding is the *kenosis*. How can anyone understand the *kenosis* when you have been brainwashed from the day you were born to press to the upward call to the grandiose: applause of men, recognition, power, fame, fun, and fortune.

The greatest preachers appear to be the most famous and the most fortunate, and the ones who seem to be most honored are enthroned and have the acclaim of mankind. This describes the upside down *kenosis*. That is what you are brainwashed with, and now the Lord comes along and says, "Let My mind be in you. Instead of my clutching and grabbing for equality with God (I already had it) I emptied myself, humbled myself, became a servant, became a man, and became obedient, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."¹¹

He says, "Let this mind be in you." How can you have that kind of mind? You have to be upside down to the world's wisdom to have that kind of mind because you have been trained and brainwashed and just brought to the point where you can only think, "climb." But here He is saying, Sacrifice! Become less. Give your life; do not take it. Be last so you will be first. This is upside down, but in order for you to understand that and receive it as truth you have to be lifted up by the *puros*, the lamps of fire of God's Holy Spirit. Please know that when you are preaching the *kenosis*, there will be some people out there that are so embedded in sin, so entrenched in strongholds, that they will think you are crazy.

Bob: Funny that you would say that. My buddy, who is having trouble with his church, listened to one of your tapes and said, "This isn't a Baptist preacher. People do not want to hear this kind of preaching in a Baptist Church."

V: Not only do some not want to hear it, they cannot hear it. The Spirit says repeatedly: "**He that has ears to hear**, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."¹³

In order to do the *kenosis* you have to yield your life to the Holy Spirit. That is meekness. The person that goes down to the bottom will be one of these 24 elders. If you are taken all the way to the bottom, all the way to the cross, you will become an elder.

Let me pray for you right now. Please bow your heads in prayer and let this prayer be your prayer. "Lord, Jesus, please accept me as a living sacrifice to you. Search my heart and purge me of any impediments to the ke-

¹¹ Philippians 2:5-8.

¹³ Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 6, 13, and 22.

nosis. I give your Holy Spirit free access and free reign over my life. I love you, Jesus. Amen.”

Chapter Questions

1. Draw the chart for Laodicea.
2. What does it take to buy clothes?
3. Describe the wake-up call.
4. What does it take to buy eye salve?
5. Why is the promise to the Laodicean overcomers so great?
6. What is the crystal sea?
7. What are the seven lamps?

Chapter 5

THE FIRST FIVE SEALS

REVELATION 4: HEAVEN

Revelation

4:1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

4:2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and [one] sat on the throne.

4:3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and [there was] a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4:4 And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

4:6 And before the throne [there was] a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, [were] four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

4:7 And the first beast [was] like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle.

4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]; and [they were] full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

This is not the rapture as some think. John is transported in the spirit to heaven to be shown this scene. We will deal with the rapture in a later chapter.

We talked about the crystal sea in the last chapter. Sea is Christianity. In general, the sea of crystal is a clear Christianity. It has no disguises, no impurities, and no guile.

Four Beasts

Four beasts are described. These are angelic, living creatures. Their many eyes before and behind indicate that they know everything that is going on in the world. Furthermore, their descriptions link them to the created order like lion, calf, man, and eagle.

I think that there is some correlation between these four angelic beings and the four horsemen that we are going to see when we get to the seals. But I am going to leave it to you to draw that correlation. They should correlate. I am going to give you my estimation, and you can throw this out the window, but if you do, then you have to come up with your own. Then we can throw yours out the window. (Laughter across the room.)

I think that man has to do with government, calf has to do with economics, the lion has to do with war, and the eagle has to do with death. That is how I correlate to the four horsemen. When we get to the four horsemen, we will dig in a little bit deeper.

These four beasts are leading the worship before the throne, and they are saying day and night “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8). This description spreads completely over the full scope of time. All of that horizontal time is vertical time to God, *kairotic* time. It is not horizontal time, but when we are looking at time, we have to see it horizontally because we cannot see *kairotic* time like God does. He is the I AM. In the past HE IS, in the present HE IS, and in the future HE IS. But we are not “is” in the past or in the future. The only time in which we are is now.

However, by faith, you can bring the reality of the future into the present, so in a

sense you can operate in the future. Humankind is limited to the now, but by faith you can live as if you are victors in heaven.

Utterances by Beasts and Elders

Revelation

4:9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

There is a distinction between the three things said by the angels (beasts) and the three things said by the elders. One says thanks and the other says power.

When you go to heaven, and you have a crown, you are actually going to exercise power because Jesus, our Lord, has inherited all power, and He is going to hand that power to the church, but that is only to the ones who are crowned. Those who are naked are not going to have power. Those who have no crowns are not going to have power. Only the elder-types are going to have power, and that power will be entrusted to you to use with your own discretion. He will tell you what He wants to accomplish in the universe, and you along with the elders will see to it that it happens.

You are on trial right now. Every one of us is on trial, and if you will use the little bit that has been entrusted to you, much will be given to you in heaven. But if He gives you a little bit of power like He gave to Philadelphia, and you do not use that power, do not expect a ton of power in heaven because you have squandered your opportunity right here. The untrustworthy servant on earth will not be trusted with more in heaven.

This is testing time. How you do in this testing time will determine exactly how God utilizes you in heaven. This is why there is gratitude from the angels, and there is worthiness of power from the elders who take their crowns off and cast them before the throne, saying “You are worthy of power.” Trustworthy servants recognize and respect absolute trustworthiness.

The angels do not have that power. The angels are messengers. You see what an angel does? He does not do things on his own. An angel takes orders from the Lord. God says, “Go tell Bill that he needs to look at such and such a book,” so he comes to me and says, “Hey, Bill, God says you need to look at such and such a book.” In my spirit, I will think that I need to look at such and such a book. You see how it works? If you earn power from God like the elders here, you too will say, “Worthy is the Lamb to receive power.”

I am going to tell you right now that every one of you wants to be there. You may not have known it before now, but you must start listening to what we are talking about here. There is a lot at stake in eternity.

Mary: Won’t the demons keep that angel from getting the message to us?

V: Not necessarily, no. They may impede our getting the message, but they will not stop God’s angel altogether. A bigger problem will be our acting on the message.

I talked to you before about why the prophetic gift does not continue on, and that we had the priestly and the royal gift to continue. We currently have three ministries duplicating the Lord’s offices. The church has royal, prophetic, and priestly offices, and each of us in the church have all three ministries. Some few of us have one of the offices. That responsibility is a given right now. But in heaven one of those is going to disappear—the prophetic function. We will

still have the priestly and the royal. The royal is exercising the power that has been placed in your hands. Everybody is not going to get power—do not make that mistake. The only ones that will get power are those who show they are good stewards of what they have right here.

The priestly ministry is when you take the concerns of the people to the Lord. When the Lord calls a council and the elders come in to the council, the people who are in authority under that council and under the Lord will be coming in to give a report. I am going to be in charge of Georgia (laughter). That is the state I am putting in for. I go into the council, then, and I say, “These guys in Georgia need such and such,” or whatever. I will be bringing that report into the council meeting. That is a priestly ministry. You exercise that ministry right now when you go to the Lord, and you say, “Bill needs some help on his energy. He is getting weaker and weaker as the semester goes along,” and you pray for me. When you do that, that is your priestly ministry. If you cannot do that now, do not expect to be a messenger from the people to the council.

If you cannot use the authority now that God has given into your hands, the Word of God, then do not expect authority in the eschaton. You are an agent of authority now, and that means that the authority that you wield is not your own authority. You are an agent, but when you put on the crown in the eschaton, you will have the authority because the Lord is going to give it to you. You will reign. Can you see the difference? It should make you just jump up and down!

Jerry: The Bible says that you reap what you sow.¹ Is this talking about not only in the present sense, but in heaven too?

¹ Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

V: Yes. The reaping will be both now and in heaven, but, it will be primarily in heaven and unchanging for eternity. God will not be mocked. We will, on the certainty of God’s Word, reap what we sow. So let us sow, sow to the spirit, not to the flesh, not to the wind. Sow to the spirit by being a good steward of your possessions, opportunities, knowledge, and time!

REVELATION 5

5:1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

5:2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

5:3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

5:4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5:5 And one of the elders . . .

I wonder if this was John talking to Himself here.

5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, . . .

It could be, you know. It could be John talking to John.

5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Seven Seals

Seven seals means universally sealed. Seven seals mean that it is slam sealed up. Even though there is a quantitative dimension to this, the primary meaning of the seven seals is that it is completely sealed in the same way as we were talking about the seven Spirits being the Holy Spirit of God, the whole Spirit

of God. The seven seals make one complete whole sealing. It is as sealed as you can get.

There is a progressive indication here because when you talk about the seven seals in one sentence, you are talking about the whole sealing. But when you enumerate them, 1, 2, 3, etc., there is a progressive nature and a quantity to the seals beyond the completeness of the sealing. But at this point, the reason for John's tears is because of the complete sealing of time. God sealed it, and only God can unseal it.

The Lord Jesus as a Lamb

Revelation

5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

5:7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

Here is another example of how the Lord is not seen until after seeing His creation. When John looks up at the throne where God is, he sees the throne, the four angels (beasts), and around them the twenty-four elders, and before the throne the crystal sea, and all of the angels are singing. All of this gathering is what John sees. Standing in the midst of all of this crowd is our Lord.

John does not see our Lord at first, and when his eyes finally do come upon the Lord, it is after a witness in which one of the elders says to John, "Behold the Lion of Juda, the root of David." Here is John looking at this wonderful spectacle. He is looking out there, and he is filled with awe. He is weeping, and he does not even see the Lord until someone says, "Hey! Look!"

John is weeping because no man is worthy to open any seals. He is weeping because absolutely nothing is free to happen. The

elder says, "Look, behold, the Lamb who was slain." Finally his attention turns, and he sees Jesus. What does he see? He sees the scars that indicate that He was slain. He does not see pomp and circumstance and all that kind of thing like we desire. We want people to look at us and say, "Look! Wow! Look at him!" That is not what he sees when he looks at the Lord.

Here, then, is the Lamb standing right there, and the Scripture describes Him as having seven horns and seven eyes. Here again, this absolute completeness is in the number seven. Horns indicate power, and later we will see that horns are people who are bearing power. Seven horns indicate absolute, total power. Seven eyes indicate absolute and total knowledge, understanding, and comprehension. Then, he relates the seven horns and seven eyes with the Holy Spirit. Omnipotence connects with omniscience. The Scriptures indicate that the two together are in the Holy Spirit.

What John sees is the markings of the slaying on Jesus. They are actually the marks of "glory" for the Lord. What are your marks of glory? Are you suffering? Let us make sure that we understand that the victory we have from the Lord came through suffering and dying. Victory that comes from Satan comes through self-indulgence and killing. Our winning is to be through suffering and possibly dying. Victory is through the *kenosis*, going down to your cross. Your victory, then, like the Lord's victory, carries your marks into heaven, your sufferings precede you into heaven as your glory. No pain, no glory! That is the way it works. As you go down into *kenosis*, as you sacrifice, you are going to be exalted after death. But if you do not go down, and if you do not have that suffering, where is your exaltation?

If you just slide through to the applause and praise of everybody, what will you have done that is so tough? Anybody can slide

through on a big soft easy chair and be envied for not having to work. It takes a real man to sacrifice in the *kenosis* by denying himself, and carrying his cross, and following Jesus. Conduct your life under that burden (Chart 5.1). If you can, show that you have the stamina to stay with it. Even when you are hurting, you stay with it. Then when you are in heaven, He will give you a crown.

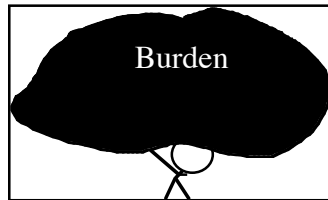


Chart 5.1

Jerry: We are going to share war stories about our scars.

V: Yes, but we have to have some stories to share.

Jerry: When John is standing there in heaven, is He on God's time, the *kairos* time, the vertical time?

V: He is on both God's *kairotic* time, and man's *chronotic* time. That means past, present, and future are present to John because he is standing in the intersection of *chronos* and *kairos*..

Jerry: Why couldn't John see Jesus?

V: Perhaps John expected Jesus to appear more like a ruler than a lamb. However I think it comes back to this propensity right now that people cannot see Jesus apart from looking at you. You need to witness, not just in word but also in your life, in your ethics, in your behavior, in your countenance, in your treatment of others.

Prayers of the Saints

Revelation

5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four [and] twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Now I think that every prayer that is prayed by a saint is collected and either acted upon at the time, or if it is a wait, I think it goes into the vial, and when the time comes, out that prayer comes, and the Lord says, "Now." You will see it, and you will go, "Wow!" He is answering the prayers. Here is a collection of prayers, and these are the sweet smelling odors to the Lord, and we will eventually see that they are incensed later in another chapter.

A New Song

Revelation

5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Now this model here of redemption and reigning through death is repeated over and over again. You reign through death. Worthiness comes through dying. These elders say that His worthiness comes because He redeemed us by His Own Blood.

Do you want to be worthy? The model describes giving our life for the purpose of redeeming others. Your life, everything that you have, everything you will have, and everything that you are, are God's assets, His spending money, His resources to spend on this earth to purchase/redeem people who have no hope. You are filled with hope because you are going to go to heaven. Heaven is the minimum that you are going to get. What you are doing now is determining what is going to happen to you in heaven.

Do you want to have the word worthy applied to you? If you follow in the footsteps of Jesus, then your life will be sacrificed for others. They, then, will have hope. You have the same mission as our Lord Jesus Christ. Is

He going to say that you are a worthy, good, and faithful servant, or are you indulging yourself and pursuing the easy and good life? Do not fool yourself into thinking that you are going to have crowns and mansions and that God is going to swoon when you walk onto the scene. That is how we think these days, but it is not like that. Worthiness comes under the same model as that of Jesus Christ, i.e. in the *kenosis*.

Henry: Paul said, "I die daily."

V: Yes, Henry, that is the *kenosis*. Daily resurrection accompanies daily dying. We tend to confuse resurrection life with temporal exaltation and the applause of men. We want to be on a throne now. When we start the climb of self-indulgence, we have it in our minds that somehow gaining renown, wealth, status, and power accrues to our spiritual credit. We connect exaltation here with a future exaltation also (Chart 5.2). But it is not like that!

Chart 5.2 pictures someone following a false *kenosis* by climbing up and seeking the applause of men, seeking a throne, seeking to climb further into heaven, but he is not worthy. Do not follow that path.

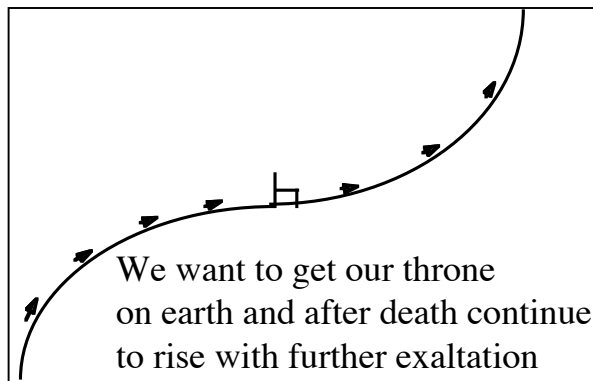


Chart 5.2

Wanda: When Jesus was on the cross dying for our sins, one of those dying with him hurled insults at Him, but the other one asked Jesus to remember him in His Father's

Kingdom. Now he did not live the *kenosis* like Jesus. Is he going to be naked in heaven?

V: Good question. He testified! He had one opportunity to hit a home run, and when the pitch came, he hit it. He gets credit for that good work, but it was not a costly work because he had nothing to lose. I don't know whether that was enough to get clothes in heaven, but he at least gets heaven.

Bob: We are preaching heaven as the maximum and not the minimum. We have all been operating under a deception.

V: Yes, we have de-emphasized sanctification and the *kenosis*. I think that it is because the Truth is hard to hear. It is even harder to live. So, we don't preach or teach it.

***Kenosis* Is Living as a Sacrifice**

Joe: We are all going to die eventually, and we want that death to be for God, but in the meantime we are to be a living sacrifice² which is the *kenosis*. But our people do not understand what a living sacrifice is.

V: Discipleship is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in continuous self-denying sacrifice.

Joe: Dr. Vinson, I say this with all humility. I want to be like Jesus. Can we get that?

V: Yes. The Lord has a plan for each one of us to get those kinds of feet. However, in order to get those brassen feet, you will have to go through the fire. What usually happens is that when we experience the pain of suffering and see everybody else enjoying themselves and saying that sin is the reason for our suffering, you will be tempted to turn from the *kenosis*. After hearing repetitively that God does not want us to suffer, your temptation will grow. The great majority of Christians are enjoying a life of ease and comfort, but you will be all alone. That is when we must understand that we have a call

² Romans 12:1.

on our lives to be spent as the Lord wants to spend His resources. The more meek you are, the less your will gets in the way. If you can just submit to the Lord and let Him spend you on what He wants to spend you, then things will get right, and you will stay in the fire when He puts you in it. But it is very difficult, and there are not very many of us that can stay in there.

In the midst of your continuous pain, you will hear the barrage of voices that are saying, “Get out of the fire, are you stupid or something?” You start hearing that, and the first thing you know a “carrot” will come by. You take your eyes off the cross, and the carrot will pull you in another direction off the path. Keep your eyes on that cross, the cross is down here (Chart 5.3). Humiliation, suffering, obedience, and self-sacrifice are a downward path, and exaltation is not scheduled prior to death. The good times are not prior to death. Exaltation comes after the death that follows a lifetime of suffering and sacrifice. Get the *kenosis* in your mind; settle it in your heart.

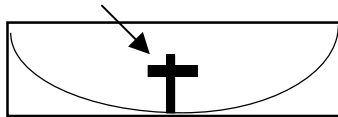


Chart 5.3

Old Song

We have this new song, and why is it a new song? Well, it is upside down. It is an upside down song. All the songs prior to the Lord are “climb up.” Climb up. Deuteronomic theology declares that the better you are the more blessings you will have, and these blessings are interpreted materially. That is exactly the way it is interpreted by most! Every saint seeks maximum blessing, but “blessing” is usually interpreted incorrectly. If you were asked, “Do you want maximum blessing?” everyone would say, “Count me in, put me down for maximum blessing.”

When James and John asked the Lord, “We want to sit on your right and left,” and the Lord said, “Man, that is maximum blessing! Do you think you can do what it takes to get maximum blessing?” “Oh, yes, strap it on us” is what they said. They did not know what they were asking for: “We are putting in for maximum blessings. Yeah, put me in. Let me sign up. Where do I need to sign? That is what I want.”

Well, maximum blessing comes in at the maximum bottom of the *kenosis*. Go slam to the bottom if you want to go slam to the top. What we want to do is reinterpret all of that. We want maximum blessing right here and now. Plus, we want it also in heaven--Get, get, get! Christ says, “Do you think you can drink of this cup?” “Oh, yes, I can drink this cup, everybody wants to drink this cup! Strap it on me!” But, friends, it is very difficult! Maximum blessing comes from maximum sacrifice. “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain” is a new song.

Worthy is the Lamb

Revelation

5:11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

5:12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

I believe that the Lamb is going to turn around and say, “Worthy is my saint who was slain.” Everything that the Lord gets, He is going to give to the church. He is going to hand His kingdom, the reigning over the universe, into the hands of His church. You are the church, so He is going to share what He receives with you. Everybody is going to say, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.”

He is going to say, “Paul, come up here. Worthy is Paul who was slain.” “Peter, come up here. Worthy is Peter who was slain.”

The guy who was not slain, who cooled it all the way through life, like a self indulgent Christian who had the wonderful life will not hear Jesus say, "Come up here man. You are worthy. You did so good. You really made me proud."

The one who loved Him enough to be slain rather than recant his faith will be worthy. When they said to Polycarp, "Recant your faith," he said, "I cannot recant my faith. He has never done evil to me, how can I recant my faith in Him." They set the fire, and Polycarp said, "Let me demonstrate my love. You do not have to nail me to the stake. I will stand in the fire. My love will hold me in the fire. Let me demonstrate it." When that sacrificial guy is compared to the materialistic guy who indulged himself, He will call the one who gave his life. He will say, "Worthy is my saint who glorified Me at his expense. The other guy glorified himself, and got his reward. His reward is over with because great is the fall of the house built on the sand.

Revelation

5:13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, [be] unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

5:14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four [and] twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

This is quite a scene, and I am going to be in this group saying these praises.

REVELATION 6: SEAL #1— HUMAN KING

Revelation

6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

6:2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Coronation of Saul

My interpretation of this seal is that this is the beginning of earthly government by a human king, and it started with the coronation of Saul.

1 Samuel

8:7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8:8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

8:9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

8:10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

8:11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint [them] for himself, for his chariots, and [to be] his horsemen; and [some] shall run before his chariots.

8:12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and [will set them] to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

8:13 And he will take your daughters [to be] confectionaries, and [to be] cooks, and [to be] bakers.

8:14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, [even] the best [of them], and give [them] to his servants.

8:15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

8:16 And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put [them] to his work.

8:17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

8:18 And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

8:19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

8:20 That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

8:21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

8:22 And the LORD said to Samuel, Harken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

Here is the beginning of a broken seal that is going to end with Antichrist. As a seal breaks it is not causative, it is descriptive. God is restraining the evil, holding it back. The people say, "We want a king," and Samuel the prophet says, "No, no, you do not want a king: let God continue to be your king. God is your King." The people insist, "No, we want a king." We have to have a king. Samuel goes to the Lord and says, "They want a king." God says, "Give them a king. They are not rejecting you, Samuel; they are rejecting me."

Jack: It is not causative; it is descriptive?

V: Yes, once the seal is loosed, the people then have the freedom to move toward their destiny. They are then loosed from their restraints. God holds them back, but when they insist on having a king, God says, "Give them a king." He looses them to their own devices. He does not cause this. He allows this. You see the difference?

Breaking the seal allows the people to proceed past that divine limitation. As a result the kings ruled over Israel to the point to where Israel went out of existence, and Judah was left alone and was taken into the Babylonian captivity all because they did not want God as their king. They wanted to see and touch their king, and they wanted a king that was a big tall man, who could really protect them much better than God. He will take care of us and fight our battles for us. The seal is broken. The seal reaches final maturity at the judgment time at the end of Chart 5.4.

Seal #1 is broken in Samuel's day and

Seal #1 A Human King			
White horse	Saul	Government	Antichrist
	David		Jesus Christ

Judgment

Chart 5.4

goes all the way out to the judgment time. Just prior to judgment time, Antichrist will arise to the throne. He is going to finally be coroneted as the king. Antichrist is going to be perceived as a great king. People are clamoring right now, looking for him. "We need us a king. One of those good kings to bring universal peace."

Pete: So is this coming of the Antichrist indicative of the fact that we, in contemporary

times, have the same type of wicked inclination as they did then?

V: Yes, and that is the reason for what is happening right now, today. The world is clamoring for a king who will take control of this planet. This planet is in chaos. We think that we need a king who is going to bring peace to the Middle East, who is going to bring us comfort, ease and much goods. So desire for a king comes out of that same mentality from seal #1.

Beth: Does Catholicism fall into this mold?

V: Anytime you have people who want a headship that is between you and God, it is from that same inclination.

Steve: I know that here it talks about being bent on conquest. As I remember in church history, that is how the Roman church grew—through military conquest, especially through that of Charlemagne.

V: Church and state are going to come along side by side. We are going to see church and state right on through the book of Revelation. Every time you see “earth” that is state. Every time you see “sea” that is church. Side by side through history is church and state: God’s people and the rest of the people, side by side, going all the way to the end.

Sybil: I think I am seeing that same inclination in my church because right now we are without a pastor, and it seems that nobody wants to do anything because we do not have a pastor.

V: Right. And submission to the Lord now is what we are supposed to be doing. See, a good pastor is not a pastor who rules over the flock. A good pastor is a person who

takes the hand of the saint and the hand of the Lord, gets them together, and gets out of the way so that that person can follow the Lord and grow even past where that pastor is.

Many pastors choose the opposite of the *kenosis* which is this inclination to climb by using the sheep. The one on the true *kenosis* is giving his life for the sheep.

You can interpret your seal to be whatever you want it to be. I am clearly going public with mine, and that is where I stand. It is the coronation of Saul. Once this seal is broken, it is going to go all the way to the end. It is going to usher in Antichrist. That is the seal that brings in the Antichrist. But look at Chart 5.4 to see how God is going to reinstate a divine king. He is going to have David, a man after God’s own heart, who is a new royal lineage from which God is going to bring His only begotten Son to the throne. Then, God will once again be King.

Antichrist will come from the original motivation for breaking seal #1. Jesus is going to come out of the original divine motivation, from the root of David, a man after God’s Own Heart. This parallel line is the Davidic line out of which Jesus comes. Jesus will then be the true King and Judge at the end times. Antichrist, man’s idea of an ideal king, will be replaced by God. The whole issue of Seal #1 is who is your king?

The breaking of seal #1 (replacing God as King with a human king) leads to absolute devastation. However, God will redeem the world by resuming His Kingship as a man through His Son, Jesus, the God-man.

Homer: I look at the decisions I make in my life . . .

V: If you can see that when the Lord is your king, and He spends you how He wants to, then you can see how the *kenosis* makes much more sense. When you are in the trappings of the human kingly line, the

trumpets, and bowls. Seal #2 depicts the war in the world that is already going on. This war is for establishing the king of the world. The great weapon is the nuclear devices that have been developed and have been

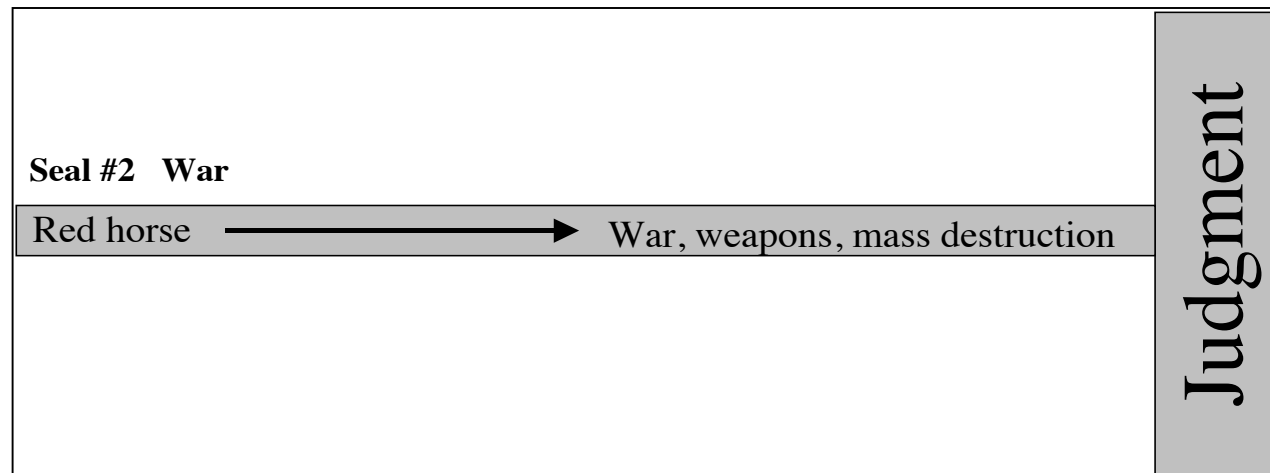


Chart 5.5

upside-down *kenosis* is the only thing that makes sense to you. People on the divine line will be sacrificing in the *kenosis*.

However, when we see Jesus, we will see Him as the Lamb that was slain, carrying the marks of martyrdom. How will the Lamb see you? You should be able to comprehend, now, the two different aspects depicted by the parallel paths all the way through history beginning with seal #1 and going all the way to the final judgment.

SEAL #2—WAR

Revelation

6:3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

6:4 And there went out another horse [that was] red: and [power] was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The ramifications for breaking this seal go all the way to the judgment as do all the seals,

continuing to multiply (see Chart 5.5).

The nuclear bomb is a great sword. Who is going to come into control of that kind of world? Which kingly line are the weapons of war going to be on? David's or Saul's? Saul's, of course. The weapons of war, the carnal weapons are going to be on Saul's royal lineage. The spiritual weapons are going to be on David's lineage. How do you Christians fight? You win by dying. That is how the Lord fought. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." How does Saul's line fight? long distance with a bow. How does the Lord fight? personally, close up with the sword of the Lord, Scripture. How do you fight? with a sword coming out of your mouth (see Chart 5.6).

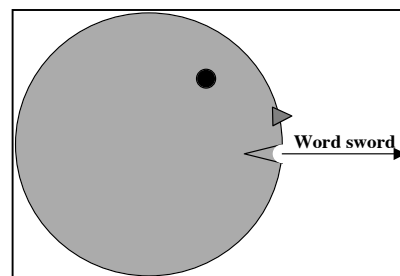


Chart 5.6

Each Seal is Progressive

I want you to see the progressive nature of the seals. When you break the seal, it is not an instantaneous result. All that is described in the seal does not happen in an instant. It is progressive. It is like a seed that is planted. It germinates, and pops up out of the ground as a tiny little plant that begins to grow. It takes all of history for the plant to reach maturity at the judgment. We see it growing, but the fullness of its destructive results mature along with it. Out to the end, you get Antichrist, the mature plant that came from the seed of a human king.

The seal is progressive. So when you see the description that is given, like this great weapon, which is going to be all of the nuclear power in the hands of Antichrist, it did not happen at the instant the seal was broken. There was no nuclear power back when the seal was first broken. But the power that you had was wielded by kings marching against kings. It could have been bows and spears and whatever, but they were great weapons and caused a lot of death and destruction. Please understand that the results are progressive.

As we get into the trumpets and on into the bowls, you are going to see how they are going to grow and magnify because the Lord's wrath is going to be added later. The current time we are talking about is not His wrath. What we are talking about here is that the seals are His restraining of all of the evil power. The people are saying, "Oh, we want a king." "No, you do not want a king." He says to Samuel, "Go talk solemnly to them and tell them what the results of a king will be. Samuel tells them, "You do not want a king; he is going to take your sons and your daughters and your money and everything. You do not want a king." They said, "Oh, yes, we have to have a king. We love kings." The people wanted God's restraint removed.

So, God broke seal #1 to let the people have what they wanted.

Joe: War for the Christian is against carnality. Spiritual war is difficult.

V: Yes, spiritual warfare is more complex than physical warfare.

Henry: Could the great weapon be one of mass destruction?

V: Yes, weapons have progressively gotten more and more depersonalized and long range, but at the beginning it was hand-to-hand sort of stuff.

SEAL #3—ECONOMICS

Revelation

6:5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6:6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and [see] thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

This seal is describing economics, and, of course, I am harkening back now to the four angelic creatures. You can correlate these. This third seal is an economic statement which is also progressive. By the time you get to the judgment time, it is going to be that all you will be able to earn economically with a man's labor will be the day's food (see Chart 5.7 on the next page).

Tim: A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny. That is a man's earnings for one day.

V: When you get close to the judgment time that is the way it is going to be. But remember it is a progressive thing, and it is going on and on and on and on, and we are in it right now. The breaking of the seal starts the process which will fully mature only at the end, at the judgment. We are progressing

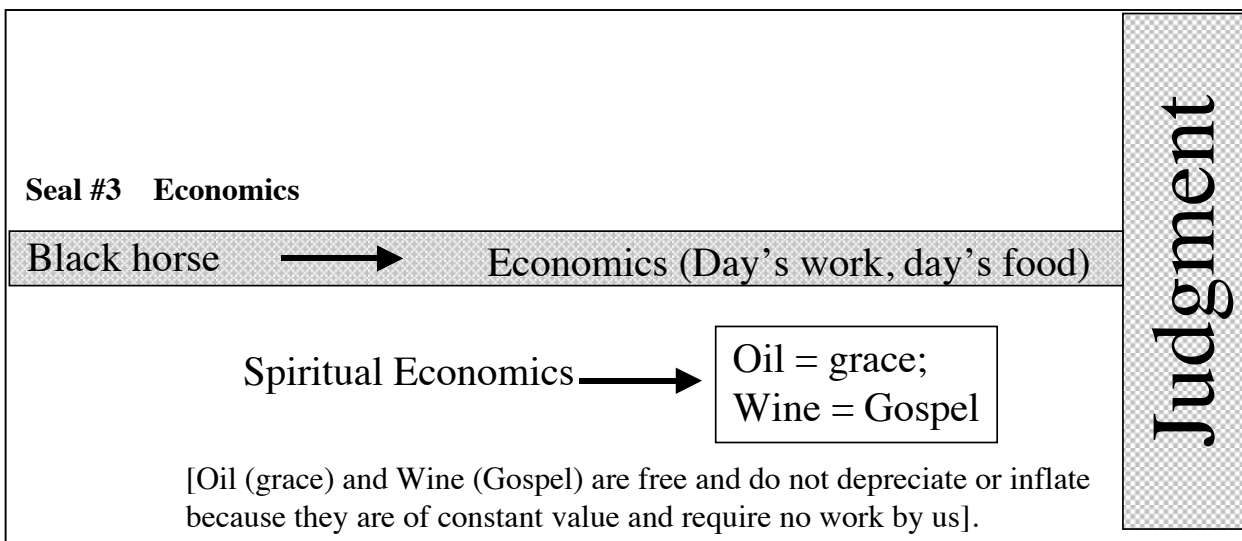


Chart 5.7

in the seals to reach the full maturation only at the end as described in the Scriptures. By the time we get out to the judgment, there is going to be not only the scarcity of food, but you will have to have Antichrist's mark to get it.

But look at the good news. The oil and wine will not be hindered by economic distress. The oil is grace; the wine is Gospel. The Gospel and God's grace will not be hindered by economics. If it is being hindered today, it is a problem in the way we are handling it. Economics do not hinder God's grace nor His Gospel. Grace and Gospel are all gift! And they even grow under persecution. The oil and the wine, then, will not be hindered—not by the king, not by war, and not by economics. They will go forth and bring in God's intended harvest.

Beth: That is why the church is thriving in China under Communism. It does not matter about the politics.

V: Yes, and during the time of the early church, the first century church when the Christians were being fed to the lions and burned at the stake and all like that, the Gospel and Grace swept the world like a tidal wave.

Wanda: Dr. Vinson, if you want grace and Gospel to grow, throw persecution and hard times on people. If you want to see it diminish and people walk away, throw good times, money, and everything else at them.

V: It is uncanny! We prosper under pressure, and we just fall apart when we have economic prosperity.

SEAL #4—DEATH

Revelation

6:7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

6:8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The breaking of this seal will loose death over the world (see Chart 5.8 on the next page). By the Judgment, 1/4 of the world will die from the loosing of this seal. Take a look at the elements: sword, hunger, death, and beasts of the earth. Think with me a minute on the beasts of the earth. The beasts of the earth are more than just lions and tigers and

alligators and things like that. I think it is also the beastly element of man that is going to be involved here.

We have progressed in this seal to an era in which there is no honor. It is considered

heroic for a person to drive by and shoot an innocent person just standing on the street. The perpetrator does not even know the name of the person he kills. He can even kill a child. It is beastly. It does not make any sense to me. It was a beast that entered the Fort Worth church last week and killed people he did not even know, people who loved the Lord, people who did good things. That is a beast. It does not make any sense. It is like an “insane” beast because even a tiger does not go in and kill for the sake of killing.

Steve: Do you think that it is going to be men and animals?

V: I think that animals are going to be bad, but men are going to be far worse.

Betty: Do you think this seal refers to any specific thing that has happened in time?

Point in Time

V: Yes, but I cannot pinpoint the event. Let me tell you. All the seals have already been opened. We are progressing in the maturing processes to the ends being described by these Scriptures. The only way we are not going to get to judgment is from the restraining activity of God. We have pushed against the stops. We have kicked against the prods.

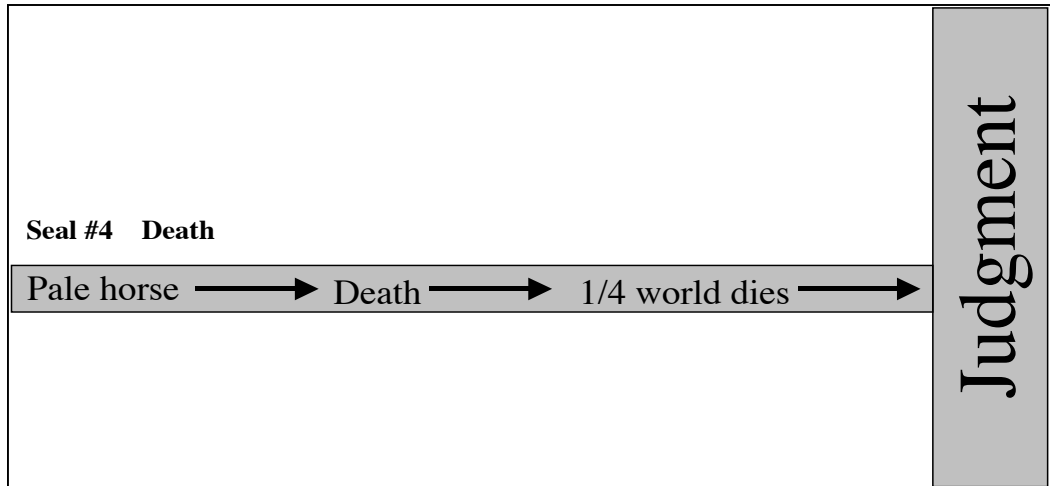


Chart 5.8

We have pressed on and on and on. Now of our own free will, we are doing things that are absurd. God has held us back, but we have clamored for more progress.

Our prophets have come to say, “You do not want this,” and we have said, “Oh, yes, we cannot progress if we do not get this. Shut up, prophet.” And the Lord says, “Okay, snap” (He breaks the seal of restraint). We run through the barrier and just keep running down the line of apostasy until we come to another barrier. God says, “You are not going past this.” We hit there and hit there, and we say, “Why are we not moving? Let us move this impediment to our progress.” The prophets come and say, “You do not want this. You do not want this.” The people say, “Oh, yes, we want this! Oh, God, open up the doors, give us an opportunity to progress in our ‘blessings.’” He breaks the seal. Then we come running through, and come to another stop. “Oh, this must be Satan stopping us out here. Oh, God, open up the door and let us through.” The prophets say, “You do not want this.” But we manage to get the restraints removed yet once again.

For example, the prophets warn that if you take prayer out of schools, you are going to have some bad things happen in schools. The people clamor: “Oh, we cannot have prayer

in schools. Oh, God, bless our schools, take this prayer out.” Then, we runnnnn through. “Oh, we must have homosexuality. We do not want to be a bunch of homophobes. Oh, God, we know that you love these homosexuals. They are heroes, and we must allow them to be married.” We run through. This scenario repeats over and over and over and over again. Pressing our way through every restraint, and God, in His mercy, is saying through His prophets, “Do not go through.” We get rid of the prophets. When someone preaches holiness and true discipleship, the congregation says, “We need a new pastor.” If you say anything about divorce, many of your congregation will say, “You are judging us!”

God is doing His part. He is sending His prophets. And He is trying to put the brakes on, and we are pushing through, pushing through, pushing through. Many of us have pushed and pushed against God’s restraining influence through our ignorance, but you are not ignorant any more.

Jill: We run through stop signs that tell us that we are going in the wrong direction and things like that. The book of Revelation is warning us that we are heading in the wrong direction. If we do not repent, then we are going to suffer in the specified ways for being stubborn and hardheaded for not heeding the warning signs.

V: Yes. God gives us clear warnings here in this book. We see sign after sign of clear warnings. What does Satan do? He comes along and says, “You do not want to study the book of Revelation. You do not want to even read this book. It will give you nightmares, and you cannot understand it. Nobody can understand it, so do not read it.” Your preacher will not study it if he is not going to preach it. The warning signs are clear, but nobody can see them because only the Lord’s slaves can see them.

In this course, you take what you can get. There will be some, God’s slaves, who will understand a lot more than others, but those who understand just a little bit should take that little bit and run with it. That is what we are trying to do here. We are going to take our little bit, and run with it.

SEAL #5—PERSECUTION OF THE SAINTS

The first four seals were the four horsemen, and they correlate to the four angelic beasts.

Revelation

6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

6:11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled.

These saints that are going to be under the altar are going to be crying out, “How long are you going to wait, Lord, until you avenge our blood.” The saints who are crying out are the ones who die for their faith. The closer to the judgment, we get, then the more Christians will die for their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. Even though you live your life in humble service doing only good things, they will whack your head off for it. For this injustice, you are going to pray, “Oh, God, how long, how long will you wait before you avenge our blood.”

Carl: This is not when the Antichrist is taking off the heads because they will not receive the mark?

V: No, you are describing only the endpoint of Seal # 5, the reign of Antichrist (see Chart 5.9). The fifth seal began with Christian martyrdom under Rome and comes out to the judgment.

I want you to see that when the seal is broken, it is not fulfilled at the instant that it is broken. It is a descriptive process. When the seal is broken, the process begins and gets worse, and worse, and worse until it reaches the point of judgment. You see how it works? By the time they get out to the judgment, then the full description will have taken place. It is a process, not a causative process, but a descriptive process. And it is not where God says, "Okay, if you do not listen to me I am going to put this on you." He is not putting anything on anybody. They are self-destructing. We are self-destructing.

The seals are broken open sequentially, but they mature simultaneously. They run in

parallel together all the way to the judgment. They begin at different times, but they all end at the same time.

Paul: Would it be accurate to say, then, that all of the seven seals, since the number seven is like a universal consummation, they all come to their end at the same time?

V: Yes, sir, all the seals are going to come all the way out to that great Day of Judgment. As a matter of fact, all the seals, trumpets and bowls progress to end at the same point.

Seal #5 in Chart 5.9 is the persecution of the saints, martyrdom. Martyr is the Greek word for witness. History is going to usher in sacrifice, suffering, and death for our method of witnessing. It is already happening around the world. Muslims are slaughtering Christians. It is going to get much worse.

You see the Lord has died. He has pur-

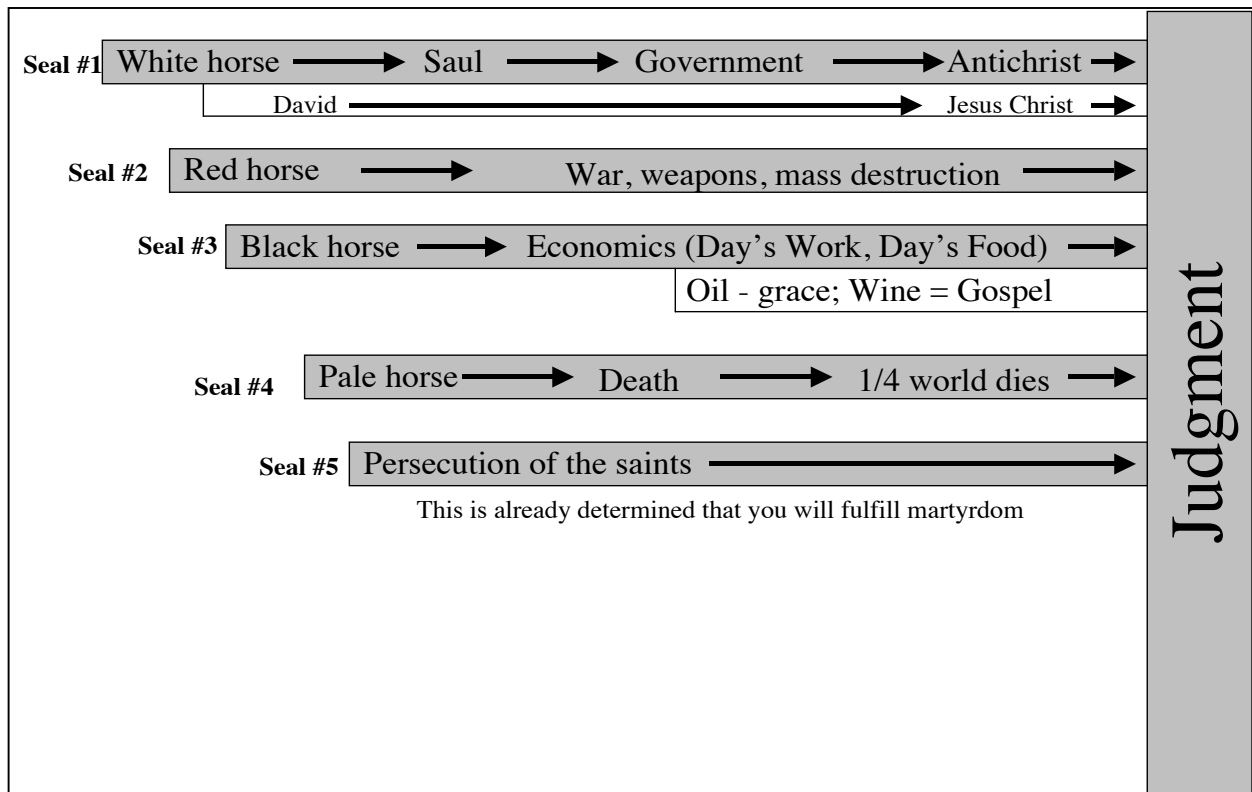


Chart 5.9

chased for you new life, but the dying and the purchasing is not over with. Now it is our turn to die and purchase with our witness additional life for others. It is not that we have anything meritorious in us. Our dying is not meritorious. Our dying is through sacrificial service to propagate the great gift that the Lord bought with his death.

Beth: Dying to self and dying to sin and that kind of thing can achieve Martyrdom?

V: Yes, martyrdom is always spiritual, but sometimes it can be physical. Your testi-

mony is *martyria*. There are different levels of persecution for your *martyria*.

Tim: You cannot be a pilgrim martyr if you are not a spiritual martyr.

V: Right. God commands us all to be His witnesses. In other words, martyrdom is for all of us.

Chart 5.9 is the complete chart of the first five Seals.

Chapter Questions

1. Duplicate the Seal Chart from memory. Describe each seal.

Chapter 6

THREE TRUMPETS

The last chapter dealt with the first five seals. This chapter will continue with the seals and begin the trumpets.

SEAL #6—INJUSTICE

Revelation

6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

6:13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

6:14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

6:15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

6:17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

When we come into this sixth seal, we are still dealing with imagery. We have already been dealing with imagery through this entire book. It is signed via imagery. We will now look at some new images.

Earthquakes.

When you are dealing with the earth, there are two general categories: *earth* and *sea*. Earth has to do with the *secular* part of the scheme on earth. The sixth seal is a disruption, a quaking of this earth and the political scene, the society that is here in

place. The events of this seal will have repercussions that are going to be worldwide, and dealing with every form of institution and tradition, and we will look at some of these towards the end of this section on the sixth seal.

Sun Darkening

Chart 6.1		Judgment
Seal #6	Earthquake, stars fall, heaven departed	

The sun is the source of light for us, and I take the sun as a sign of justice and truth available from Christ. If you have a darkening of justice and truth, there is going to be a lack of capability of people making wise decisions, and we see that happening today. There are people making asinine decisions because the Lord's justice and truth are being suppressed. There is a darkening of the minds. There are still some justice and truth available in our scenario today, but when the sixth seal is fully matured (see Chart 6.1), we will get to the point where there are none because the sun is going to be totally blackened.

Moon Turns to Blood

Now there are many people who are looking for these things to be literal, where the sun blackens and the moon turns to blood and this kind of thing, but if you are going to interpret the book of Revelation in that way, then you are denying what God has already said, and that is that these are signs, and the angel is to communicate everything in this book by signs through John. John writes the description of

the signs that he sees. It is up to us to see the truth in the signs, and that is what we are doing here.

Blood coagulates and putrefies quickly when it quits circulating. Thus the Lord's witnesses, the light reflecting from the moon, quit circulating and become putrid. One of the causes that stop the witnesses is the restraint caused by the threatened loss of tax exemption. The church's witness is no longer bringing light into the darkness because to do so will cause the church to lose its tax exemption.

The moon is the reflector of justice and truth. Who are the reflectors of justice and truth? You are the reflectors of justice and truth. When you talk about the moon, you are talking about what comes out of your mouth. What comes out of the Lord's mouth, the Word of God, is the absolute source of justice and truth, and that is considered the sun. If that is the source and you are the reflectors, you are supposed to be witnesses of the Lord in bringing forth justice and truth in a testimony to planet earth, and if you are turning to blood, and your source is darkening, then truth and justice are lessening in the land.

I think the moon's turning to blood is also coming from the persecution of the saints. Persecution may possibly quiet down your testimony and your reflection of justice and truth. You may stand back from witnessing and no longer become a source of light in the darkness. You are becoming putrid. What good is a moon that reflects no light?

The moon is reflecting the light, the justice and truth that come from the origin, God's Word. We are supposed to reflect that. But there is going to be a putrefaction of our reflection, and the moon becomes as blood. I take that to mean that our witness is going to be cut off because we are going to shut up in order to keep our tax exemption and prevent persecution. But eventually we will be executed because our silence will expedite the

advance of darkness (injustice). We will be taking a look at that execution when we look at the people who came out of the great tribulation.

Stars Fall to Earth

God has already told us what the stars are. The stars are angels (Revelation 1:20). The angels come falling out of heaven.¹

What I see this to mean is that there is a kicking out of heaven of the fallen angels. They are booted out. You know how when Job was being tested, how Satan would go to the throne of God, and he would accuse Job before God, and he would say, "If you would just let me do this, he will turn against you." The Lord would say, "Behold my servant Job, test him; do that but do not kill him." Now Satan has no access to the throne of God any more because he and all of his angels have been kicked out. They have hit the ground like a bunch of figs coming out of a tree that is being blown by the wind. You can imagine what it is like when they hit the ground. They scurry off like a crab, running to find a hiding place. If a fallen angel is found by one of God's angels, there will be war.

Harry: This is a result of the war in heaven?²

V: Yes. One-third of the angels were thrown out of heaven. That event is Seal #6. This has already happened in my opinion. You can reject my opinion, but I will be anxious to hear your opinion. Anyway the angels hit the earth where they are confined. They need refuge. Where are they going to get it? They can come into your home. All you have to do is take something into your home that should not be there, and it is like putting a neon sign out front: ALL DEMONS

¹ Revelation 6:13.

² Revelation 12:7. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

WELCOME. JUST COME ON IN, and if they have a welcome, the angels of God do not have power over them. Did you know that they have every right to be in your home if you have something evil in your house?

Here is another thing. If the head of the house invites the demons in like what I am talking about by having something in there that he has authority over, and the second in command in that household says, "Demons get out," they do not have to leave because they have permission of the strong man of the house. So beware, you fathers, you husbands, you head of the house, get your house in order.

Carl: You said all demons are welcome. Does that mean there is no limit?

V: There is no limit.

Here is the way it works. They are always going to oppose you when you live godly, but they cannot abide in your house if it is a sanctified house. Now if you bring something evil in there, it is no longer sanctified. There is an open door, and they can come in there, one or two or 2,000,000 can come in there.

Carl: Define what you call evil. Is it like statues or something?

V: What I would define as evil would probably be broader containing more things than what most people would define as evil. My definition would be a lot more restrictive for the saints. I would rather not specifically define evil because I might give a definition that gets a more mature saint off the hook or puts a less mature saint on the hook, and I do not want to do that. Defining evil is God's business.

Betty: Would it be things like pornography and drugs . . . ?

V: Those are good examples. It could be music, it could be things that are seemingly innocent.

Henry: Could you not say evil is anything that is not pleasing to God?

V: Yes, you sure could.

Tim: The Bible says if we resist the devil, that includes demons, he will flee.

V: Right, but their fleeing does not preclude further attacks. When you are acting in foolishness, they will come against you in strength. If you detect them you can send them flying. It is when you do not detect them that they hurt you and bring all kinds of stumbling blocks in front of you.

When these stars hit the earth, they have to find refuge. If they are found outside of a safety area by the good angels, it is my opinion that they are in big trouble because there is a war that is going on between the angels, and when the evil angels are caught outside of a refuge, they are open game, and God's angels can put the fist to them. They need, then, a refuge place, and it can be into the body. It can be into your house. It can be into your church. It can be into anything, even animals. Within their refuge that is theirs by rights, they are untouchable by God's angels unless the person with authority over the refuge says, "Get out," and cleans up his own place. When that happens then God's angels can come in there and enforce that authority. But unless that head authority takes the initiative, they are completely safe.

Betty: What happens if like me as a wife, I realize that we have brought something into the house that is evil and unclean, and I get rid of it, then what?

V: If you have the authority to get rid of it, and it came in under your authority, then you can excise or get rid of all evil influences and sanctify your house.

Betty: But if the husband brought it in, he has to remove it.

V: Exactly because he is higher than you. But if you brought it in, you can get it out.

Sybil: What if he brought the evil thing in, and I get rid of it while he is gone. I mean that is still going to leave the demons . . .

V: There is still a neon sign lit up and saying welcome when the husband returns.

Sybil: The husband still has the authority over his house and the demons have some ties to it because he is not sanctifying himself or his house.

V: Right.

I do not know if you have figured it out yet or not, but I think all the seals have been loosed, and we are well into the trumpets, and I will show you where we are in the trumpets here in a little while.

Let me tell you another thing, too, and that is that these things are progressive, and so when the sixth seal was loosed that does not mean instantaneously that there is no truth and justice in the world. We are in a progressive state of darkening. Do you understand what I am saying here? These seals are linear, and they all come out to the end point, one after another. (See Chart 6.3.)

When we get to Seal #7, then we are going to start a series of trumpets that are going to have the same parallel progressions and the same ending point as does the seals.

Oscar: You had said that the first seal was broken when Saul displaced God as king. Can you tell us when the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth . . .

V: No, I can only show that they are in progress.

After the stars were kicked out of heaven, heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together. A great separation between heaven and earth had occurred. This separation is going to have some important consequences.

The earthquake is so severe that the mountains and islands are moved out of their places. Mountains are institutions. Huge in-

stitutions that were once considered invincible are going to fail. The secular world agrees with this interpretation. The First Union Bank is being called a mountain in its advertisements. Prudential calls itself the Rock of Gibraltar.

Mountains are institutions on the earth, and islands are institutions in the sea. Can you hear what I am saying? All of these rich men, kings, chief captains, bondsmen, free-men want to hide themselves in the institutions of the earth. They are looking for money, security, insurance, IRA's anything to hide themselves and give themselves security. They are not looking for security in the Lord, and it is a shame because many church members are looking for the mountains to fall upon them and give them security. Security is sought in the institutions.

Jill: Give us an example of institutions in the sea.

V: Denominations, conventions, associations, churches, the cooperative program, the annuity board, the tract society, a lot of institutions in religion.

Jill: Are you saying that sea refers to religion?

V: I think it is Christianity.

Joe: What about the seminary?

V: Yes, it would be an institution. So your security is not to be in institutions. It is only in Jesus Christ.

Jill: And when they say the mountains fell on them, you are saying they want security?

V: That is right. They are looking to be hidden from insecurity, and they are trying to cover themselves in material security. We see this a lot in the wealthy, the powerful, and the famous. They are looked upon as super-spiritual. You get a wealthy Christian who does not know anything, the next thing you know, he is speaking to millions on television.

You get a great football player who gets saved, the next thing you know he is teaching and preaching all over the world even when he does not know anything. It does not make any sense. People of the *kenosis* are down at the bottom without influence, but the ones who are of the institutions (in the upside down *kenosis*) are right up at the top.

Reggie White was the exception as an example of a football star that became a preacher. He studied and knows of what he is speaking and is pastoring for the long haul. However, some football players get saved on Tuesday, and on Wednesday they are preaching and lecturing when they do not know anything. It really does not matter what they know. If they were good football players, then it is assumed they are good theologians.

The wrath of the Lamb is coming next in verse 17 at the end of Seal #6. Seal #7 is the opening of the trumpets, which will warn of the coming of further tribulation and the Lamb's wrath.

Purpose of Seals

Now I want you to see something here. The seals are a set of restrainers. The Lord does not want to open the seals. He has said to these people, "No, do not go there, do not go there," but the people have rebelled, and said, "Oh, yeah, we want to go there. This is the best place for us to go. Let us go." And even the Lord's people want to go there. So everybody is pushing against the seal, and the Lord removes the barrier to their wills. Then the people run through, but they can only run so far, to the next barrier, the next seal. They clamor, moan, and groan. God sends His prophets who say, "Do not go there, do not go there." The people keep clamoring, and just when they cannot stand it any longer, God opens up the next seal. This is a series of restraining efforts by God to keep people from going further into apostasy, but people keep clamoring to go further.

Purpose of Trumpets

Now the trumpets have a different purpose. After the people have come through all the restraints that eventually will lead to their spiraling down into reprobation, there is going to come a time when truth and justice is not even going to be on the planet, not even one little tidbit is going to be on the planet. When you lose truth and justice, you are going to self-destruct. That is when God says, "I have to shorten the days in order to keep the people from killing themselves."³

When we come to the point of the trumpets, he is no longer doing restraints and opening those things at the clamor of the people. Rather, the trumpets are to announce a message. He is saying I want your attention, and now the trumpet has a different significance. It means "look to me." When you see these signs, look to me." The trumpet is blown to get everybody to turn around and look at the warning signs. These signs are warning that if you do not turn, you are going to suffer what I am describing in these trumpets. When we go through these trumpet blasts, He is saying, "Repent, people, repent." He is no longer removing barriers because all have been removed. Now we can run all the way to no truth and justice at all on the planet.

That is where we are headed, but He is going to continue to call us back via the trumpet soundings. Some few people have ears to hear, and they are going to look around and say, "See that sign?" They are going to hear the trumpet, and they will say, "God is trying to tell us something here." When a saint does that, the lukewarm saints are going to jump on that saint and criticize him for attributing disasters to warnings from God: "You can't keep saying that all of these disasters are God's warnings?" They will criticize you and downplay God's actions in history. They will believe that the events of

³ Matthew 24:22.

history will happen and are happening no matter what God thinks. They are going to criticize you and wait for the moon to turn to physical blood. As they criticize, there is going to be a quenching of the Spirit for the saints especially when persecution begins, and persecution is right here in Revelation 7.

Pete: Matthew 24 says, "The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light."⁴ Is this the same thing that He is talking about?

V: Yes.

Pete: Also in that discourse there in Matthew, He is talking about how there will be earthquakes and famines. Now these are literal things in Matthew?

V: No, these are still signs, but there is a double entendre in these signs. Sometimes the sign needs to be recognizable by either the lukewarm saint or the lost person. Sometimes you have to hit somebody with a two-by-four for him to know that he is doing something wrong. Therefore, I think that in God's grace there are going to be literal fulfillments of some of these signs, but not all of them. Most of them require the eyes of faith rather than just a huge knot on a sore head.

Pete: Would famine be death, then, in that sequence he is talking about in Matthew 24?

V: Yes, famine can be double entendre: (1) it can be lack of wheat bread and stuff like that, but more importantly (2) lack of spiritual bread, the bread of life. We are already in the midst of famine.

Pete: Famine in hearing the Words of the Lord?

V: Man shall not live by bread alone.⁵

The following passage is a parenthetical following Seal #6. It is a reflection of what is

going to begin to happen much later in the sixth seal.

REVELATION 7

Revelation

7:1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

7:2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

7:3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

7:4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: [and there were] sealed an hundred [and] forty [and] four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Then there is an enumeration of the tribes. The sixth seal is progressive. It has already been opened. Darkening is progressing, and the moon is turning to blood. That is already happening. It is not fully matured with the awesome repercussions. Institutions are beginning to collapse. People are going to be looking at institutions for their security. There is going to be a great earthquake. Out of all of the consequences as truth and justice darkens, there is going to come the great persecution because right is going to become wrong, and wrong is going to become right. A great reversal is coming because there is going to be no truth and justice. It is going to go completely black with no light of Christian witness.

Apostasy is progressing as a spiral down into reprobation as described in Romans 1. The seal is progressive, going to an end point. That end point is a total blackening of the sun and a total putrefaction of the moon. Right now, the sun is darkening, and as the sun darkens, we will begin to be charged with

⁴ Matthew 24:29.

⁵ Luke 4:4.

hate crimes. Preaching against abortion and homosexuality may soon land us in prison.

Pete: A governor of a northern state claimed in a news article that all organized religion was a sham, and that Christians were weak-kneed, feeble-minded people.

Ted: I heard yesterday that a law was being discussed that would make criticizing sexual orientation a hate crime.

V: Yes, we are going there. Homosexuality is on the upswing. There is coming a time, and it is close, when you will go to jail for preaching against homosexuality. The moon is turning to blood.

Four Angels

The four angels are holding the four winds away from the earth, the sea, and the trees. The earth, of course, is the general, secular planet earth. The sea is the religious planet earth. The trees are the economic planet earth. The four winds are, I think, winds of doctrine, and I believe that these doctrines are going to result from the darkening of the sun and moon.

These new doctrines are coming as winds, or spirits blowing across the earth. I do not know what they are, but it shows four angels holding them back—and this is not one of those kinds of symbolic numbers like seven and ten—this is a specific number which means four. I do not know how you want to read that.

Beth: What did you say trees are?

V: The trees are economic. Trees and grass are economics.

Wanda: I find myself scared of what is happening here. I want to look diligently for the Lord's saving grace. The four winds are good doctrines?

V: No, they are bad doctrines being suppressed by four angels who are eventually going to loose them on the earth. When

loosed, those bad doctrines will sweep this earth with destructive results. The angel with God's seal says, "Do not loosen them until we seal God's servants."

Sealing the 144,000

Sybil: John said, "I saw another angel beside the four angels ascending from the east, and this is the one that has the seal of the living God." Is there some significance in that?

V: Yes, he is going to seal the 144,000 servants in the forehead, i.e. seal their minds against the false doctrines. I believe now that these servants are slaves who do the Word of God because if you do the Word of God, you will know the truth of the doctrine.⁶ That knowledge of true doctrine is the seal. These are servants, and God's promise is that if you do the Word, you will know the truth of the doctrine. You are sealed in your mind so that you will know. Then when the four new doctrines come sweeping around the world, these servants will not be fazed by it.

Ted: Jesus said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."⁷

V: Yes, exactly.

Ted: The sun rises in the east. Truth comes from the east. That is where the angel of God is from.

V: Oh, yes. Man! That is good!

Paul: On these four doctrines that you are talking about, could that be related to the forming of the one-world religion that comes upon the earth in this time? Three world religions (Christian, Jewish, and Islamic) are united by the first five books of the Bible.

⁶ John 7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

⁷ John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

V: Yes, to form the one-world government, religion, and economy because it is talking about earth and sea and trees. So the winds of doctrines are going to touch on all three of those areas.

Pete: The only people who are going to get the seal in their foreheads are the 144,000?

V: Yes, the 144,000 servants of God, and these are converted Jews. I believe that this is a literal part here, because he enumerates the tribes. There seems to be enough specificity in the enumeration of the tribes to indicate that these are 12,000 actual people from each of those tribes.

Mary: Are we going to be raptured out, or are we going to go through the tribulation?

V: The tribulation is in process already. We are not to the rapture or the extreme tribulation yet.

Mary: I do not mean to slow you down, but I need this answer. You said the 144,000 could be literal. Could the tribulation come as a result of their witness?

V: Yes, it could. Tribulation is going to progress. Let me show in answer to your question what happens to the people that get led to the Lord by the 144,000. Now these 144,000 Jews I think are going to have some kind of protection, and it may be geographic. That protection is not going to extend to those outside of the 144,000. It could be that they are witnessing on the other side of the planet, but they are protected wherever they are. But look what happens to all their converts.

Countless Martyrs

Revelation

7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

7:10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

7:11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and [about] the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

7:12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, [be] unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

7:13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

7:14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

7:15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

7:16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

7:17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Now here is a promise, but I want you to see that Seal #6 is going to bring great tribulation on this planet. When you have the darkening of truth and justice, and a reddening (darkening as it turns to putrefied blood) of the reflection of the witness or the prophetic word of the church, as it continues to putrefy, then there is no source for truth and justice. There will be no more witness of truth and justice, and as a result of the lack of truth and justice, great persecution across the entire globe will occur. That persecution is going to be of everyone who is being saved. For each one there will be the requirement to make a public profession of faith. When that happens, off comes the head.

Where we walk down the aisle today, and we pray to receive Christ, these people will walk down the aisle to spiritual life but also to physical death. It is to die. When we go into baptism, we say that we are buried with Christ in His death, but raised to walk in newness of life. These people will do it literally. They will go down into death, and come up and walk in heaven with a palm in their hand, a white robe and be right there in the temple of God, and they will not ever have to leave because they showed their love enough to God by demonstrating absolute loyalty to Him. If you demonstrate your loyalty to Him, He will demonstrate loyalty to you.

I think the sealing of the 144,000 servants is a spiritual sealing in the forehead that indicates their thought processes will never be corrupted. The winds of doctrines are sealed away from their minds. There is going to be a hurting of the earth and the sea and trees that means a hurting of secular society, religion, and also economics by those four winds.

Paul: Do you know what the emblem or logo on that seal that will be placed on the forehead?

V: I do not think that it is going to be a physical seal. I am thinking that it is a spiritual seal that is achieved only for those who are real “servants,” i.e. slaves. It is similar to, but greater than, the seal that you and I are getting today when we do the Word of God that we know. That promise by God to give us knowledge of true doctrine,⁸ to discern whether it is true or not, comes from doing the Word of God. That piety, then, is a seal that is progressive, and there is going to be this sealing of the 144,000 of the Jewish-type servants, not you, but the Jewish-type servants who are total servants, radical slaves.

You are getting your seal today. They do not have their seal, but they are going to get one because it is going to dawn on them in a

progressive manner that they need to start believing and doing God’s Word in a radical way. When they start truly following the Lord, they are going to turn away from all the sacrifice and all the ritual and all the externals of Judaism. Then, they are going to deny themselves, pick up their crosses, and follow Jesus. Once they start doing that, all of a sudden they are going to be able to see, “Hey, these winds of doctrine are evil!” They are going to know what the *kenosis* is. They are going to know what sacrifice is. They are going to be able to know God’s Word, their spiritual gifts, and what they are supposed to be doing. They will see how important witnessing is. Then there is going to be their strong witness that is going to sweep the world simultaneously with the sweeping of the world by the winds of evil doctrines.

A student from a prior class said there was some significance to the twelve thousands. His explanation was that the thousand years is like a day to the Lord, and so he took his 12,000, divided it by a thousand, and came up with the number 12. Number 12 is one of those significant numbers. It means a whole number. In order to have 12, it could be 12 generations of converted Jews that are being sealed and have been witnessing all along on this planet.

His theory is an interesting concept, and I bring it up as an alternative to what I am teaching. I am willing to listen to that alternative because it is feasible. However, I think the delineations of the tribes point to real numbers.

White Robes

Ted: In verse 14 it says, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes.”⁹ Are the robes souls?

V: No, the robes are clothes that you achieve through works. Works clothe you.

⁸ John 7:17.

⁹ Revelation 7:14.

The blood washes you. You are washed from your sin by the blood of Christ. Your clothes are earned via works, and they are washed via martyrdom. The cleansing of your soul is a free gift, but it does not dress you up. That is up to you, and even the crowns are up to you. Everything after the initial washing is up to you. These guys have been servants, and servanthood gets clothes. All “servants” have clothes, but martyrdom got them washed clothes and palms in their hands.

Betty: Dr. Vinson, in Isaiah it talks about the garments of salvation¹⁰ and the robes of righteousness. When they say the garments of salvation, does that have to do with the one piece that was under the robe? Could it mean that when you get saved, you will at least have your underwear?

V: It is possible, but I would not count on it. The garments of salvation are the garments of the sanctification part of salvation, not the justification part. Thus the garments of salvation would be then a parallelism with the robes of righteousness.

Every one of us wants to think that we will have our undergarments. Sometimes the Word of God describes someone as being naked when the person had only his undergarments. So there is hope for us in that area because if we stumble and mess up, we would at least have some underclothes. Every one of us wants to hold to that hope. However, the threat of being naked is still present.

Tribulation

The tribulation would be another highlight of chapter 7. Those saints came out of the

tribulation. I want you to see what “ek” or “out of” means. One concept of tribulation is that you bypass it, the wonderful escapist mentality that most of us have that says we are going to escape tribulation. We are just going to be raptured or pulled out, and we do not have any stress put on us because we are such favored people (see Chart 6.2. 1).

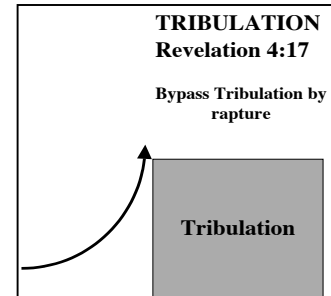


Chart 6.2.1

There is another idea. Out of tribulation means that the saints were in it, then they escaped out of it, and that is what these saints did. They came out of great tribulation (see Chart 6.2.2).

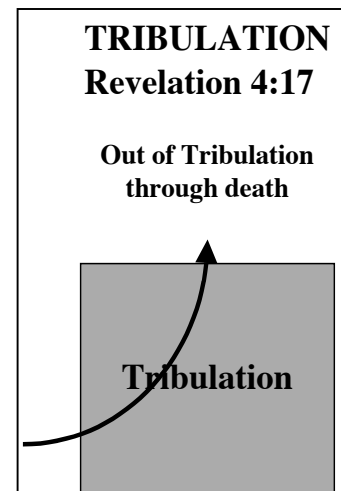


Chart 6.2.2

Then the third concept is through tribulation. In this case, the saints passed all the way through tribulation and came out of it on the other side (see Chart 6.2.3). These are the three ideas that are abounding all over the place.

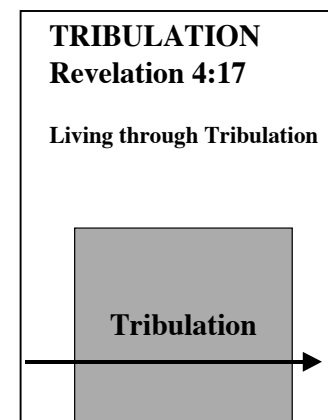


Chart 6.2.3

What I want you to see here is that these who

¹⁰ Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels.

have the palms came out of tribulation. That is the middle illustration (Chart 6.2.2). They came out of tribulation so that means they were in it. These are the saints who have endured tribulation and died in it. Death is how the exit is made.

Mary: The ones with the palms?

V: The palms indicate that tribulation cost them their lives. In order to be considered a disciple it costs you your life through self-denial. It is supposed to cost us our lives as well—if not through actual death, then through sacrifice and self-denial.

Mary: We could be those saints.

V: We could be those saints because Seal #6 has already been loosed, and we are in the trumpets. This is an explanation of the mature Seal #6. All of the seals end at the same point. Seal #7 looses the seven trumpets, and all of the trumpets end up at the same point where the seals end. When you get to the maturity of Seal #6, you are maxing out on what is going to happen on this planet (see Chart 6.3). When Seal #6 is matured, He will have loosed all until there is nothing left to loosen. There are no more restraints: “Go do what you want to do! Just go do it!”

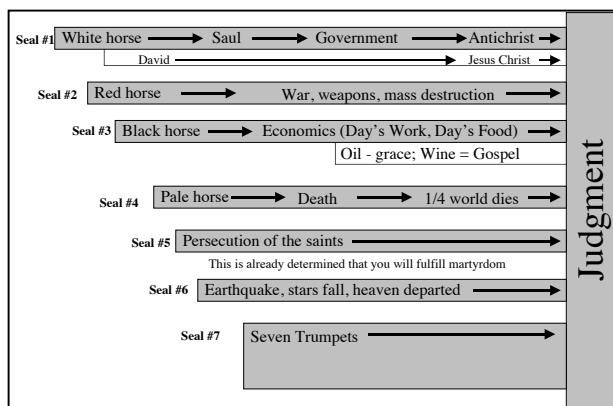


Chart 6.3

Mary: Has this seal been loosed?

V: Yes, but is it not fully matured. The seventh seal has already been loosed, too.

Tim: You know those students in that terrible incident where the gunmen shot them down. They asked a few of the victims first if they were Christian.

V: Yes.

Tim: That is tribulation?

V: Absolutely, that is tribulation. I think we started this class with a talk about Polycarp. That is tribulation, folks, and if we are escaping because we are so special, how come Paul did not escape? He was more special than we are! Why did not Polycarp or Michael Sattler escape? If you have taken my church history, why did all those saints who were tortured to death not escape? Why do we think we are so special that we are immune to tribulation, and that God is swooning over us?

Tim: I think that what people fail to realize is that if you look from Genesis all the way through, there is not an incident of anybody that was in tribulation that did not go through it. Look at Noah, what happened to him. Did he get a way out? No, he was on a boat for thirteen months, thank you very much.

Wanda: What about the three Hebrews, did they get somehow taken out? No, they got thrown into the furnace. All of them went through, every incident. You go through it; you do not get out of it.

V: We have to go into it, but we could either come out of it via death like Polycarp or come through it like Noah.

Jack: Facing the cross, Jesus said, “Is there any way to remove this cup?” And the Lord sent an angel to minister to Him, but He went through that cross. He did not jump off or go around it. We follow Christ so it is our turn to go through it. We think that we are going to take a short route and get an exit out of here early, it is not written that way.

V: Right. That would make God a ressembler of persons where He respects us and swoons all over us. What is so special about us? Nothing! We are worse than all prior generations.

Mary: It seems to me, Dr. Vinson, that to die a martyr's death is a very special thing to an individual, and it is almost like a blessing.

V: Martyrdom is not to be sought because that is foolishness. It is a terrible loss of life. However, God is able to redeem all temporal losses into eternal blessings. That, my brethren, is the majesty of God's power and wisdom. Martyrdom, then, becomes an honor and a blessing signified by the palms in Scripture.

Ted: You say when we get to the sixth seal we are maxing out?

V: No, not when we get to it. It maxes out at its end, at its maturity. The sixth seal is describing the most terrible scenario.

Ted: Kind of like God's last restraint?

V: Yes. Once He loosens that . . .

Ted: You go through this point, and I am done. You are on your own.

V: Yes, and so heaven rolls up like a scroll. He just says, "Okay, do what you want."

Mary: But you know it has been God's grace all along that has been holding us back.

V: That is right, and we do not deserve that merciful restraint, but He has been holding us back.

Mary: God does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance.¹¹ The seals just show His love for us because He has been holding us back for thousands of years.

¹¹ 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

V: You are right. The seals are just the majestic love of God which we do not deserve.

Paul: So when the sky is rolled back, that is not Ichabod, is it? The Holy Spirit removed?

V: No, no. The Holy Spirit is still here. The Holy Spirit is still in place. The scenario is that God says, "Okay, I cannot do any more for you; I have tried to restrain you, I have tried to hold you back. You are clamoring for destruction? Okay, go ahead." The Holy Spirit is always going to be in place convicting of sin and righteousness.

REVELATION 8

Revelation

8:1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

Seal #7 (The Releasing of the trumpets)

This means that we are about to move from an active kind of resistance here where the Lord is restraining evil man via the seals. One seal after another He yielded to the will of the people by loosing the seals and letting the people go to the next level of evil. We are about to move now to a more passive action from God.

Instead of seals, God is going to use trumpets. He is going to sound the trumpet, and He is going to say, "All right, if you have ears to hear this trumpet, look at the signs and see what I am saying."

Tim: What is the significance of the half hour?

V: I think it is to call attention to the importance of the fact that the final gateway to total evil has been opened. It also emphasizes God's change of action. God is changing his action from restraint to calling the attention of the people for repentance.

God's dealing with the spirit of man is making a huge move, a transition in kind.

Prayers of the Saints

Revelation

8:2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer [it] with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Incense is the spiritual addition to the prayers of the saints to make those prayers acceptable to God. This is significant here because sometimes Christians may pray, "God, kill that guy; he is being mean to me. Just kill him." That could be the kind of prayer that we pray. When that prayer goes up to God, He does not want to hear that mess because He is a redeeming God. The Holy Spirit, then, comes in and incenses that prayer, and makes it acceptable to God.

Ted: Then God kills him. (Laughter throughout the class.)

V: The incense is the spiritual addition that makes the prayers acceptable by sanctifying them. It makes it a prayer that God Himself would pray.

Ted: If I am saying, "Kill that guy," the Spirit would step in . . .

V: . . . and change that prayer so God can say yes to it. When you pray, God does not say yes to your prayers unless they are acceptable. He does not say yes just because you are saved.

Henry: It is like the Bible says, "The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us because we do not know how to pray."¹²

V: Yes.

Revelation

8:4 And the smoke of the incense, [which came] with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

The angels are involved in the prayers. The incense represents the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, God the Father, the angels, and the saints are all participating in this scene. There is a whole lot of action that you cannot see that is going on. We need to be able to see with the eyes of faith, and use these scenes here to get our eyes opened up. I believe that my prayers are among these that are spoken of here.

Precursors to the Trumpets

Revelation

8:5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast [it] into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

When you have thunderings and lightnings and voices and earthquakes, then you have a repeat of what happened in the book of Exodus when Moses was going to the mountain to meet God. When God descended to the mountain, earthquake, lightning, and thunder accompanied Him. God speaks in the earth storms. However, not many have a clue to what He is saying to the earth.

¹² Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Joe: The earthquake here is to draw our attention to something that is about to happen?

V: Yes. And all this quaking business has to do with your society, your institutions, the tremblings of what is secure on the secular part of our planet. It is not a seaquake; it is an earthquake.

TRUMPET #1—ECONOMICS

Revelation

8:7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

On the first trumpet when it is matured, one-third of economic systems (trees), the larger economic systems of big businesses, are going to go down the tubes. They are going to burn up. The economy of the little people and small businesses (grass) is going to be burned up. Across this planet, then, when this trumpet is sounded, and it is matured (it begins the process at the sounding, but at the end point, at the point of judgment, there will be economic chaos), the little man, the private businesses are going to be swallowed up and be destroyed. There is not going to be any profitability for the little man to try to be an entrepreneur. That is going to be gone. The only ones that will survive are two-thirds of big businesses. One-third of them are even going to go down the tube at the maturation of this trumpet.

Joe: Could that be what is going on now?

V: It is happening right now. This trumpet has blown.

Jack: Is there any significance in the fact that it says **green** grass?

V: Yes, green grass indicates that they are growing, doing good, and profitable. All of these prior seals such as the darkening of the sun, you see, are going to have destructive

influence. Pretty soon we are going to be so “wise” that we will pass more restrictive laws and taxes. EPA and OSHA will add further restrictions as will the Labor Relations boards, and pretty soon small commerce will be stifled, and no one will be able to make a penny.

TRUMPET #2 INSTITUTIONALISM

Revelation

8:8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

8:9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

This trumpet is to draw attention to the sea which signifies the Christian church. The great mountain burning with fire is institutionalism that will destroy God’s living church. Thus institutionalism lands in the church and sucks the life out of a third of the Christians. Instead of the people denying themselves, taking up their crosses, and following Jesus Himself, the church becomes an idol that is substituted for the Lord. One-third of the people in the church are going to die spiritually. This mountain is burning with fire. That means that it is alive but consuming the church. Institutionalism is alive today, and it is a driving force that is growing and sucking the life out of the saints.

Nothing should be between the Christian saint and God. But the church will be inserted between them in institutionalism. Instead of witnessing for Jesus, the saints will be witnessing for their individual churches. Instead of pointing to Jesus as the answer, the people will be pointing to their church where Jesus can be pointed to. All it takes is just a little tiny deviation to get off course. This trumpet has already sounded.

Instead of following Jesus, the members follow the institution. The Lord is the Savior, but worship turns toward the institution.

TRUMPET #3 FALSE PREACHING

Revelation

8:10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star . . .

You know what the stars are.

8:10 . . . from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, . .

Seems like it gives off light.

8:10... and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

8:11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Now this is you. You are the fresh water, the clergy. Your ministry flows into the sea and brings life and refreshment to the sea. Wormwood, though, comes down on you. Your preaching delivers death not life.

You can see wormwood in Jeremiah 23. It tells us that God is going to be pointing His hostility, anger, and retribution upon the clergy.

Jeremiah

23:9 Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness.

23:10 For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force [is] not right.

23:11 For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD.

23:12 Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery [ways] in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, [even] the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

23:13 And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err.

23:14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

23:15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with **wormwood**, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land.

23:16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, [and] not out of the mouth of the LORD.

23:17 They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

This passage speaks about the clergy. Here, Jeremiah is preaching to Judah just before the Babylonian captivity. Judah is in apostasy, but they think they are in revival. Judah is sinking low, but they are worshipping like you would not believe, going into the temple, and they are preaching, "The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord." That makes them righteous just because they are in the temple of the Lord. This change in worship and preaching that follows institutionalism in Judah foreshadows what is happening today.

After the burning mountain lands in the sea, wormwood lands on the fresh water, the

fountain of waters, i.e. the clergy. Your preaching or lack thereof is strengthening the hands of evildoers. You are not teaching sanctification and the *kenosis*. You are not calling for the people to examine their spiritual gifts and find God's path of ministry for them. You are just preaching justification and glorification. You are not calling the people to repentance according to 2 Chronicles 7:14. Instead, the people are being fed wormwood, the preaching of institutionalism which includes political correctness that will prosper the church as an institution. This preaching that omits God's definition of discipleship, the *kenosis*, and the doing portion of the triangle of piety is causing many to die. Celebrating gifts has replaced using our gifts in ministry. The professional pastors have shut down personal ministry by the individuals by taking sole possession of ministry. Wormwood is in our pulpits, and many men will die by drinking the bitter waters from our pastors. Amazingly, God warns His people to stop listening to these prophets of vanity (Jer. 23:16).

Man! That is a terrible situation when God warns us not to listen to His prophets because they are preaching out of the imaginations of their hearts. They are saying that peace is going to come upon you if you are coming to church and tithing. "Oh, peace is going to come upon you." And they say, "Do not worry, there is no evil going to come upon you." Preaching of peace and the lack of evil and hardship coming upon you while you are in the midst of a life and death war is false preaching. God said later in Jeremiah that a true prophet always preaches repentance. If there is no repentance from false discipleship, do not listen to them. If there is no preaching that exhorts the individual saints to exercise their spiritual gifts as real disciples of Jesus in ministry, do not listen to them. If they glorify their church, do not listen to them. Preach Jesus as crucified and resurrected as Lord.

Teach your people to follow only Him in the *kenosis*.

In Malachi God said that my prophets are going to have their blessings turn to curses.¹³ That means that when you are under the teaching of a false prophet, and he gives a blessing to you, you are going to receive a curse. Do not even sit under the false prophet because you will receive a curse instead. This warning is from the Word of God. Wormwood has come down here in the third trumpet, and it has landed on the clergy, the fresh waters, and that wormwood is an evil angel. He is convincing the clergy, and they are going to preach weak-livered messages that are building their institutions. Their message has no call for repentance, and thereby the hands of evildoers are being strengthened. There is not going to be any changing and stepping up and becoming the men of God that your members need to be. Church members are going to receive nothing but praise as their society sinks into depravity.

Jill: And that one has blown?

V: Yes. It is active right now. You can even get two homosexuals married in the church.

Jill: By a female homosexual pastor.

Bob: Turn on the TV and listen to the evangelists preaching love, joy, fulfillment, and no worry without any call for repentance.

V: No self-denial, no cross, no following Jesus in the *kenosis*, no personal ministry, nothing but hearing and rejoicing in peace and prosperity.

Oscar: Sit under one of those false prophets. Does that mean to be taught by

¹³ Malachi 2:2 If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay [it] to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay [it] to heart.

them? Or are you talking about just hearing their preaching.

V: If you hear the blessings in your ears, and receive it into your hearts, they will be turned into curses. Malachi—go read it.

Steve: Did you say what the ships were in verse 9 because I did not catch that.

V: Yes, I think I did. When you are in the general church, which is the sea, guess what the ships are?

Steve: Individual churches.

V: There, you have it.

We are stopping on the third trumpet, which has blown. I will take a couple of more questions, then we will dismiss.

Homer: In verse 9 also where it says the creatures, which were in the sea and had life, is that just a reiteration of verse 8 where it says that a third of the sea became blood?

V: Yes, those in verse 8 are the people who are becoming putrid, and verse 9 describes them as dying. This death in verses 10 and 11 is from the wormwood in you preachers.

Ted: Wormwood did not give death to the preachers?

V: Correct, I think we read about that principle in Thyatira.

Ted: Wormwood is pretty much being false prophets?

V: False preaching. It is the easy stuff of institutionalism without the calling for repentance and sanctification within Christian piety.

Wormwood is false preaching, and I base it on Jeremiah's definition. This is a trumpet that is going to mature all the way out here to the end, where there will be nothing but those politically correct preachers who are preaching that homosexuals are wonderful, that we ought to ordain them, we ought to marry

them. That is no call for repentance. As a matter of fact we are going to get to the point where the only way you can be wrong is to be right.

Paul: You were talking about a call to repentance for the people who are not doers of the Word of God. Jeremiah-type preaching might be able to wake some of those people up.

V: That is what I am saying.

Paul: The people that reject God's Word are looking toward this type of teaching, the tickling of the ears type of stuff.

V: Yes, your protection comes in doing the Word of God. When you are doing the Word of God, you will be sealed just like the 144,000. It does not mean that you are not going to get killed. It means you are going to know the truth.

Steve: Concerning our listening to false prophets, we tend to think that we are strong enough to know what to take in and reject. Talk to us a little about discerning that.

V: Okay. Institutional church membership makes one a partner in that institution. As a partner, you participate in that church. Any kind of corporate punishment that comes down from God on that church hits every partner in it. Okay, so if you are going to be in a church that has the burning mountain in it, or wormwood in its pulpit, then you had better be there as God's missionary to warn it. You are going to be the prophet of the Lord saying, "Turn this thing around," and if they are going to repent, they will. If they are not, they are going to throw you out. Your tenure is going to be short lived.

Paul: A prime example of reversing the error was Moses in the desert where he turned the bitter waters sweet. Israel had come out of Egypt with false doctrine and false gods and false beliefs. Moses put forth the truth

and, therefore, turned bitter or wormwood into sweet water.

V: Yes. That is what the true prophet does.

Tim: As prophets, we need to be careful that we are teaching repentance as well.

V: Absolutely. If we do not, we have the same problem. We are, then, spouting out water from wormwood, and it will kill the people.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe Seals #6 and #7.
2. Differentiate God's actions when moving from seals to trumpets.
3. Describe the 144,000.
4. Describe the martyrs.
5. Describe the 3 methods of saints bypassing, coming out of, or going through tribulation.
6. Describe the first 3 trumpets.

Chapter 7

MORE TRUMPETS

TRUMPET #4, DIMINISHED WITNESS

Revelation

8:12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

8:13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

This is a trumpet call. You remember when we looked into the seals, and the seals revealed a darkening of the sun and a darkening of the moon. The darkening was progressively moving toward a total darkening. That seal, you see, is progressive, and it is going to be an advancing darkness all the way to a total blackness when you get out to the end times. You remember how I drew an end-time judgment? All the various seals are going in that direction (see Chart 7.2 at the end of this chapter).

Those seals were God's restraints. The trumpets are now calls to repentance. God was using the seals, contrary to the trumpets, as restraints of evil on the earth to keep the light in place, to keep truth and justice in place. He wanted those good things to stay in place, but the people were pushing against those restraints that God had in place. The church was supposed to be watchmen on the walls, and telling with a prophetic voice, "Do not go through this seal, this restraint. Restrain yourselves, pull back, do not flirt with temptation, stay with the truth and justice that God has given to us. Make man's laws come

right out of God's laws so that they will be true and just." The people have not heard, plus the voice of God's people has been quieted to the point where it is just a little squeak now.

The people are doing what they want to do and ruling on the basis of values normative to their new progressive culture of materialism and hedonism. One of the things that they are demanding is homosexuality. Laws favoring homosexuality are in place. There will soon be laws against speaking out against homosexuality. This situation means that darkness is closing in around us.

As reflectors of the light, which is what the church is, we are basically like the moon. We reflect light from the source, and we bring light into darkness. But the trumpet blast that comes at this point, Trumpet #4, is to alert you that you are darkening, and you may not even perceive the fact that you are darkening.

A trumpet, then, is different from a seal. A trumpet is to get your attention. It is a loud, certain sound that is to call the Christians, the ones that have an ear to hear it of course, to hear the trumpet blast and to cause you to look around to see the reason for the trumpet blast. You are to be able to look around and very clearly and easily see the darkening. That darkening is in a progressive state (see Chart 7.1, near the end of this chapter that shows all the trumpets).

This trumpet blast occurs during the maturation of Seal #6 before it is completed. When you see this kind of darkening, you should redouble your efforts to be the prophetic voice calling for repentance among our people that are passing these stupid laws that suppress the good and promote evil. If you do not, we will progress more rapidly all the

way to the end of Seal #6. The trumpet blast is to get your attention.

The seal was a restraint, and we pushed through it. We go clamoring through this seal, and we go into the next level of self-destruction. Even though God has released the seal, it is not causative because He did not push us through there. Our destruction is because of man's stubborn will demanding the release. As we go running through, God, out of His grace, gives the trumpet blast. We are supposed to hear the trumpet. If you hear the trumpet blast, you will redouble your efforts to get the people to stop their progression into apostasy. But how do we hear? You hear by what is associated with the trumpet blast. You hear the trumpet by looking around and seeing the condition of our society. If you can see, it ought to knock your eyes out. It ought to be so loud that it is deafening.

Joe: Are not all seven seals open now?

V: Yes, but they are progressing. All the seals have been opened, but they are not fully matured. When He opened a seal it was not a mature seal, it is a seminal seal. When you go blasting through a seal, like it was a gate, you are not totally apostate, just on the other side of the gate. You still would have a long way to go in this process of the slippery slope down into oblivion.

Henry: Are there other restraints beyond the seal on that same path?

V: The trumpet blasts are to call the attention of the church, and the church holds in its hand the deliverance of the world: 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people . . ." So that means then that if the church can hear the trumpet blast, there is hope for the lost world, but if the church turns a deaf ear to the trumpet blast and just pushes on with the rest of the people, where is the hope? God has already done His part. It is our turn.

Joe: The majority is just going to stay politically correct.

V: That is right. While you are hearing the trumpet blast, they will be saying that there is no big problem. You have to be deaf and blind not to hear the trumpet blast after having read what we have read in the book of Revelation. Many of our Christian brethren are deaf and blind because they are not real disciples of Jesus. They are not His slaves. Get them into Hebrews, Bible Doctrine, Evangelism, and Revelation. Then they will be waking up. We have some good things going, some good classes and good training. We just need some good students in them who are willing to become true disciples of Jesus.

Ted: Do you think the seared conscience and the lack of hearing go hand in hand?

V: Yes, I do. I believe that the seared consciences result from the lack of hearing. I think that the lack of hearing results from self-interest. We will talk more about that later.

The blowing of the fourth trumpet is calling attention to the progress of the sixth seal. The sun is becoming as black as sackcloth, and the moon is becoming putrefied blood. All the seals are opened and running. Now the trumpets are starting (see Chart 7.2), but the trumpets have a different purpose than the seals. The trumpets are to call your attention. We have already gone through the seals. Seal #7 transitions into Trumpets. Seal #6 is eventually taking us into total darkness. But Trumpet #4 says that you are already 1/3 dark. That means then that in God's mercy He is blowing the trumpet to call your attention to the fact that it is getting dark and that you are going towards total darkness.

Look around and see what the results are right now. You ought to be able to see that it is at least 1/3 dark right now, what will it to

be like when it is fully dark? When we are fully dark, right is going to be wrong, and wrong is going to be right. If we are not already getting there, folks, then I am a fool.

Carl: Dr. Vinson, half of the people do not study the Bible, and they do not have a clue. Like you are saying, there should be something of God in you when these evils like homosexuality arise. Christians should never accept blatant evil.

V: Yes, ignorance, heresy, or a combination of both are gaining the upper hand in Christians and producing more darkness.

Ted: We did not get this way overnight. What has happened is that the bad doctrine and lack of Bible study have both been a long time progressing. We have lulled ourselves into a false sense of security. We have more people in our churches that are biblically illiterate. They know more about the Dallas Cowboys than they do the Gospel of John. We need to turn the tide. Pastors, like myself, need to call the attention to the evil. Like you said, if we love our people, we are going to tell them the truth.

V: That is right. Every chance you get, hammer in there, just cut out all the fluff—get rid of it! Commit tonight, get rid of the fluff! Go straight to the core of true discipleship. There are people dying and going to hell right now because we are playing church. There is just too much at risk here.

Paul: Maybe we need to be preaching more about . . .

V: . . . Personal Christianity that issues into true discipleship as evidenced in holiness and ministry. The church does not have a steeple! The church is the people practicing Christian piety.

The trumpet blasts are calling attention to the progressive nature of the opened seals. Who can see with their eyes and hear with their ears will hear the trumpet blast and

begin to watch out for the people. You are going to tell people, “We are going in the wrong direction. We are going toward destruction. We must repent and turn around.”

A Look at the Clergy

The third trumpet indicated that wormwood had landed in the fresh water, and that is us, the clergy. That indicates to me that we are not teaching and preaching the truth. Instead, we are teaching and preaching fluff and institutionalism. Each is trying to grow his little empire at the expense of the Kingdom of God. You do not want your parishioners to get their hands in the Lord’s hand and they go off together. That will deprive you of your assets. So, you begin to guard against the Lord’s getting another so that you will not run out of tithers.

You see the problem? John the Baptist showed us how to do it. He was standing there with his disciples, and when the Lamb walked by, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God,”¹ and his disciples **left him** and **went with Jesus**. Now that is a real minister right there.

Describing Our Job

We are to be watching and hearing all these trumpet blasts. We have already reviewed three of them, and the fourth blast has just been described, and it has to do with 1/3 of the light. We are 1/3 of the way through the maturation of seal #6. The angel blew that trumpet to get our attention so that we would not run pell-mell down to the end of Seal #6. All of these seals and trumpets are progressing together concurrently. How can it be stopped? Only the church of Jesus Christ can turn the tide. We hold the only key

¹ John 1:36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! 1:37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

in our hand: “If my people who are called by my name.”² That is a big “if.”

The first requirement is to humble yourself. That is basically impossible. In my opinion, there is not a chance that will happen. The church cannot humble itself. The church is the wonderful, great bride of Christ with unspotted garments. How can you repent when there is nothing wrong with you? You cannot even humble yourself much less repent, seek His face, and turn from your wicked ways. All those actions are impossible for your present-day kind of church.

Your job, then, is to rescue the perishing one by one, and you can forget about preaching in some stadium and having the whole world repent. That is out. You are going to rescue only one by one. Get your loved ones, get your co-workers, get your neighbors, tract all over the place, pray for those people and for everyone’s sake, vote and vote right. That is what the disciple’s job is. Are you pastors real disciples? Then get your people into their ministries by helping them discern their spiritual gifts and God’s call to follow Him in His ministry that is especially designed for each one of them.

The time is quickly coming when the church is going underground. Church work will be sneaking over to your neighbor’s house while the police are not watching and talking to them and witnessing and giving an invitation, praying that they will not turn you in.

Use the Bible

Quit preaching the party line! It has gotten us to this point of darkness. Please tell your people what God has said. Tell them the truth. Put the *kenosis* back in place. Teach the sanctification part of salvation. Tell them what a real disciple is. Get your people

trained and into their own personal ministries. Tell them to awake, arise, and walk.³

REVELATION 9

Trumpet #5, Woe #1: Love of Death

This angel proclaimed three woes. The first woe was the fifth trumpet.

Revelation

9:1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

9:2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

9:3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

9:4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

9:5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment [was] as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

9:6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

9:7 And the shapes of the locusts [were] like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads [were] as it were crowns like gold, and their faces [were] as the faces of men.

9:8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions.

9:9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings [was] as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

² 2 Chronicles 7:14.

³ Eph. 5:14-17.

9:10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power [was] to hurt men five months.

9:11 And they had a king over them, [which is] the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue [is] Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath [his] name Apollyon.

9:12 One woe is past; [and], behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

This trumpet is a blast calling your attention to suicide, euthanasia, and abortion. We have reached the situation in which people desire death. There is a clamor for death. Death, death, death. Who is the angel of death? Apollyon, Abaddon. That angel is the star that fell from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit.⁴

You remember that the stars are angels.⁵ The star comes down; he opens up the pit, and out comes this great smoke. Smoke is a clouding that adds to the process of this fourth trumpet where we have justice and truth being darkened.

Your witness has been darkened because you are the moon, you are the one that brings reflected light into the darkness, 1/3 of your witness has been darkened. It is dark today because the church has not demanded the freedom to keep on keeping on. One-third of the church's witness has been sold for tax exemption.

Now it is against the law to take a Bible into a classroom in a public school, to pray in a public school. This country was founded on these kinds of freedoms, but now many of our former freedoms are against the law. The church is losing its influence because 1/3 of its witness is gone. You have less than 2/3 left, but it is going down hill. It is slipping away.

The smoke comes up while you are already at least 1/3 dark. This smoke is ascending right out of the bottomless pit. In the midst of the smoke is all the demonic activity obscured by this smoke screen that is arising so that you cannot discern what is coming at you. All of this propaganda about death is being slammed at you from every direction. It further says that this demonic activity is not going to affect our economy at all—not the little man at the green grass level and not going to affect the big company at the green tree level. It is going to affect people, and if you have the seal of God in your forehead, it is not going to affect you either.

Massive Demonic Activity

This demonic activity is worldwide. It is the rush of all of these locusts swarming all over the place. They have brought a driving torment into the world. If you try to start talking about taking the right of abortion away, you are going to get your head knocked in.

I have stood out here on a Fort Worth sidewalk and taken abuse for just holding up a sign that says, "Abortion is murder." I have held that sign up, and people have driven by and cursed me, and if it had not been beside a six-lane city street that was filled up with cars, they would have stopped and beaten me to a pulp. A pedestrian actually threatened me, but a big man in our pro-life group came to my defense. That is how bad it is.⁶

There is also a clamoring for the desire for death to progress because these locusts have a driving compulsion like a scorpion sting. When a scorpion stings, you cannot stand still. You are going to move. That is what these demons do. They are going to move the people that do not have the seal on their

⁴ Revelation 9:1.

⁵ In Revelation 1 it was disclosed that stars are angels.

⁶ That event occurred back in the 1990's.

foreheads to clamor for suicide, abortion, and euthanasia.

Steve: One of my daughters is a nurse, and I have told her not to assist a doctor who is doing an abortion. I told her, "Because when we come before God, you are going to answer to God for helping the doctor perform an abortion." Am I wrong or not?

V: I think that you told her the right thing. It is now costly for us to take a stand for the truth. It might cost you your job, but when we get a little bit further in this seal, it is going to cost you your life.

The smoke that comes up out of the abyss is composed of spirits spreading a darkening propaganda.

Government

These demons of death are coming up out of the abyss and spreading out all over the world. It is like an army on mission to conquer the entire world.

The crowns of gold mean that their influence is going to be rooted in our government. The people in our government are going to be the pawns in Satan's hands to be a driving force throughout the land. The government officials with the faces of men are going to be rulers in high places. The hair of women indicates that they are going to come across as nurturing and caring rulers. They will persuade the citizenry that we need suicide, abortion, and euthanasia because they care for us.

That smoke is going to be coming up, but what are we going to see? The government loves us. Yes, we will begin to think that we need to have euthanasia, suicide, and abortion. The smoke is boiling, and it will blind you. You yourselves who have the seal of God in your forehead can still see, and the torment will not get you. The torment drives the people that do not have the seal of God to

progress further in the seal. However, the smoke can still obscure some of your vision.

Abortion, Suicide, and Euthanasia

The torment is demonic-driven, and it is top down from the government to the people, and the people are herded up like cattle. They are being influenced around the world. Abortion, suicide, and euthanasia are everywhere. I believe the five months will be the extension of abortion to include the first five months after birth. You might have opportunity to examine that child for five months and then kill it if you are not satisfied in any way. It will not be called killing, just aborting.

Beth: This seems to fall into place with cloning.

V: Yes, it could hook up to the "clone and kill" practice of harvesting stem cells. But it will not be limited to cloning.

Tom: What the government has done, is not easily detected. We have blinders (like horses) on our eyes, because we are so busy and have not been able to see. We focus so much on our work and paying bills and surviving that we have not been able to pull the blinders off.

V: Death is progressing. This trumpet has blown. Suicide is rampant among Islamic terrorists who practice suicide bombings. Suicide is taking many lives around the world because of the loss of freedom and hope in socialism. Abortion has taken the lives of an entire generation. Euthanasia is being considered in cases of death selection for people deemed useless in society. The withholding of treatment in order to bring about death for people over fifty years of age is already being practiced in other countries.

I think the teeth like lions is referring to the irresistibility of the government. They will bite through every form of resistance. The pressing on of this army of people driven by the demonic is going to overwhelm us.

Not only that, but they are going to have the breastplates of iron on their chests, so that their defenses are impenetrable. You attack them, but your attacks just bounce off. When they attack you, the mouth of a lion will bite through any of your defenses. But to whom are they going to have access? only the people without the seal who elect them because they outnumber us.

The smoke that comes up from the furnace is going to fill the air, and that is what you have to be able to see through. Sharpen up your eyes and look through that smoke screen that is just there to get you to shut up and be dazzled so that you cannot give your witness, your prophetic voice, and therefore Trumpet #4 is darkening by 1/3 the moon which is reflected light. It all connects together.

The lions are out there chewing away. They have such a sweet personality. They have the appearances of nurturing mothers, which causes the citizens to swoon and say, "Oh, Planned Parenthood and AARP are nice people who care for us. We need these nice provisions which they are offering to us." The citizenry generally includes the church. Do you know that many in the church do not know how to vote?

Homosexuals and murderers and pornographers and thieves and abortionists know exactly how to vote.

Ted: Who are the men that seek death and cannot find it?

V: They are the people that want to die—seeking euthanasia. Some have a terminal disease. They are people who want to die now, and they are hiring Dr. Death whoever that joker is. Some have ruined their lives and are in despair. Some are Islamic terrorists seeking a quick trip to heaven so that they can

begin to frolic with their 70-700 virgins.⁷ Others are the young who are caring for their aged parents. The young do not want their parents to stay alive because of the hindrance.

Trumpet #6, Woe #2: War with Middle East

This is where we are in time. Trumpet #6 has blown, but Trumpet #7 has not blown.

Revelation

9:13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

9:14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

9:15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

9:16 And the number of the army of the horsemen [were] two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

9:17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses [were] as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

9:18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

9:19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails [were] like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

9:20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

⁷ Has anyone ever stopped to think that heaven for the Muslim man would be hell for the Muslim virgin. Also where do the Muslim women who are not virgins go?

9:21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Trumpet #6 describes a great war involving the Middle East. It starts there near the river Euphrates. Those angels who were bound inside the river Euphrates have been loosed for the purpose of destroying 1/3 of mankind.

Jerry: We also determined that they had to read Jeremiah all the time that they were bound because the Bible says that he threw the scroll of the book in there. So they are really mad (laughter throughout the class).

Death for 1/3 of Mankind

This trumpet warns of a war that breaks out in the Middle East that will kill 1/3 of the planet. This is the kind of killing that comes from bullets and bombs and that kind of thing. The killing that we saw earlier with wormwood and the fiery mountain was spiritual killings, i.e. killing of the church through institutionalism and preaching of the upside down *kenosis*. After a third of the church died from institutionalism, the spoiling of a third of the clergy through wormwood caused many more to die. Not only did the clergy get wormwood, but many men died. It is spiritual death that occurs in the church.

Trumpet #6's war is dealing with the planet. We are not talking about spiritual things here. It is a full-blown war that comes out of the Middle East.

Those four angels are loose on the planet right now. I believe that loosing (trumpet #6) occurred on September 11, 2001. War was declared on America and the world by Muslim terrorists. America has declared war on terrorists.

The war of trumpet #6 is on. One-third of the people are going to be killed in this global war that originated in the Middle East right near the river Euphrates. The war is now in

process, when this trumpet is fully matured, 1/3 of the people on the planet will be killed. All but the last trumpet, as you can see, have already blown. All the seals have been opened. Everything is on "go," but here we are waiting. We are standing here at the end of verse 12 having just heard that two woes are past. Behold there comes one more woe. That is what we heard. There is one more woe to come: that woe is the last trumpet, the rapture.

Homer: In verse 20 it says that the rest of mankind that was not killed by these plagues still did not repent. Is that to imply . . . ?

V: That implies that everybody that is still left alive will not repent because they are not "hearing" the trumpet blast. The ones who "heard" are the saved who have ears to hear. The saved without ears and the unsaved are not repenting because they have not "heard." The unsaved can still be saved by hearing the Gospel, but their salvation does not come as a result of hearing the trumpet.

Steve: You are saying that this world war precedes the rapture?

V: Yes, because the rapture is at the last trumpet.⁸

Jill: The last woe is the rapture?

V: That is correct.

I need to go back to the fifth trumpet so you can get a better understanding. We are dealing with this euthanasia and abortion and all this driving force of locusts and the blinding smoke.

Luke

10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Mark this verse. This is a reference to the stars falling from heaven like the figs falling off the fig tree in a strong wind that we talked about earlier in this course. Here is the refer-

⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

ence to Satan falling, coming down out of heaven onto earth, and it says:

Luke

10:19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

You are sealed. If you have the seal of God in your forehead, neither Satan nor any of the serpents or the scorpions have any power over you. These are demonic forces. When it says serpents and scorpions, it is not talking about literal serpents and scorpions. It is talking about the demonic. He says further,

Luke

10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Here is the promise in Luke that because of whose you are, God has sealed you up as His possession. There is not going to be a problem with our having these demonic scorpions driving us to commit this kind of thing.

Your problem instead is going to be in wisdom and the ability to see through the smoke. That is your problem. If you will use the glasses that God has given you through the Word of God and analyze what is coming at you through the smoke, you will be able to discard all this junk and get down to the root issues and make some proper decisions.

Those proper decisions will not be blatant sin. Many churchmen want the church to adopt blatant sin. They want the preachers to quit preaching about blatant sin. You ought to be able to see through that kind of smoke. When it is blatant sin, just say, "It is blatant sin." Look through the smoke. John 7:17 is the eyeglasses that you need.

Do What You Know

John

7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or [whether] I speak of myself.

7:18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

Do what you know to be the truth. If you will just do the truth, then your eyes will sharpen up, and you will be able to see through all this smoke screen that is trying to fool you and to get you off guard and to give you confusion. The little truth that you do can be multiplied by doing it. If you do the little that you know, you will have additional truth. You spiral up by doing what you know to be the truth. But on the other hand, if you do not do the little truth that you have, you will be darkened, and you will spiral down.⁹

The smoke gets harder to see through. Be faithful to do the truth in order to see through the smoke. If you ever stop, if you are the preacher or the pastor, and God gives you a sermon, and you start to prepare that sermon, and you think, "Oh, my land, we are having such a hard time meeting the budget. I can't preach this because some of the families will get mad because they have been committing these sins. You are spiraling down, folks. It is then going to be difficult to see through the smoke. You will be useless. Somebody will need to be your guide.

Please pause for a few moments and reflect on what you need to do to bring Truth and Justice from the Lord to your church and community. (pause) Will you do it? Please pray with me now: "*Lord Jesus, I know one thing that I should do to be your disciple. I commit now to yield myself to you in the area of my _____. Please work in me and accomplish your will on earth by using me to do that thing.*"

⁹ Refer to the Triangle of Piety in course #1 on Doctrine.

Please search my life and determine all other changes that you want to make in me. In your name and for your glory, Amen."

The Rapture is Coming

Mark

13:24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

That verse in Mark describes the maturing of Seal #6.

Mark

13:25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, .
..

You know that verse 25 is describing one of the seals in which the fallen angels are kicked out of heaven.

Mark

13:25 . . . and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

13:26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

13:27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

That passage describes the rapture which we are nearing and will be discussing in the next trumpet.

Mark

13:28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

13:29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, [even] at the doors.

13:30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

13:32 But of that day and [that] hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

13:33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Now this passage is a warning to us. The rapture is at the door. But none of us can tell you when it is going to happen. We cannot say it is going to happen next week. We cannot say it is going to happen next year. We can say this: we can look at the budding fig tree, and we can say that summer is at hand. It is at the door. If we cannot look at these trumpets and these seals and see the evidence in our society, then we cannot even look at a budding fig tree and tell what season it is. Look around; the end is at the door.

The Cost of Discipleship

Luke

14:25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

14:26 If any [man] come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

14:27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have [sufficient] to finish [it]?

14:29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish [it], all that behold [it] begin to mock him,

14:30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

14:31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

14:32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

According to verse 33, the cost of discipleship is everything! God is calling out His disciples today. Will you be His disciple? Will you pay what it takes to run this race all the way to the end? It is a hard call. Many of us have never had to sacrifice. We have only just celebrated. We go to church and sing and pray and feel good and get blessed. Every bit of that worship is with a purpose. That purpose is for you to realize that Jesus is Lord. He is calling for **you** to be His disciple, not just his cheerleader, but a disciple. A disciple is required to sacrifice everything.

We are coming to the end now. It is time for the church to stand up and be counted. **You** are it. **You** are the ones who are called. **You** have been called very clearly in these words. Will **you** take a stand? Stop and tell God right now.

I know that there are some of you who are going through some hard times right now. You question, "Am I right? Is the pain that I am suffering an indication that I am on the wrong path?" That is the kind of question that is going to come into your mind. This smoke that is pouring out of this pit is coming up right now. It is blinding us, and we are having a hard time seeing through all the smoke.

I want you to know that Jesus does not mince words, and He does not beg people to come after Him. This passage started by saying, "A great multitude was coming after Him and He turned and he said, 'If you are not ready to forsake all that you have, you cannot be my disciple.'"¹⁰ He does not beg anybody. He is **telling you**, "Deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow Jesus."¹¹ When you get confused in the smoke, just go back to this idea that if there is no pain and suffering in it, you are on the wrong path. You are on

the glory-now path, and that is the wrong path.

The Rewards of Discipleship

Mary: Going back to suffering, I am reminded of Paul's words in the book of Romans where he said, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."¹² We need to realize that whatever pain and suffering we endure it is still temporal. But Romans 8:17 says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; **if so be that we suffer with Him**, that we may be also glorified together." The more I read Scripture the more this message just pops out at me.

V: It is popping out to me, too—through the smoke.

Jesus says blessed are you when you are persecuted.¹³ If being a disciple were easy, anyone could do it. *Agape* is a love that contains sacrifice. "Greater love has no man than that he lay down his life for his friends."¹⁴

REVELATION 10

Trumpet #7, Woe #3: The Rapture

Revelation

10:1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow [was] upon his head, and his face [was] as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

10:2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and [his] left [foot] on the earth,

¹² Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time [are] not worthy [to be compared] with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

¹³ Matthew 5:10 Blessed [are] they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹⁴ John 15:13

¹⁰ Luke 14:33

¹¹ Matthew 26:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23.

10:3 And cried with a loud voice, as [when] a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.
 10:4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying

10:8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go [and] take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.
 10:9 And I went unto the angel, and said

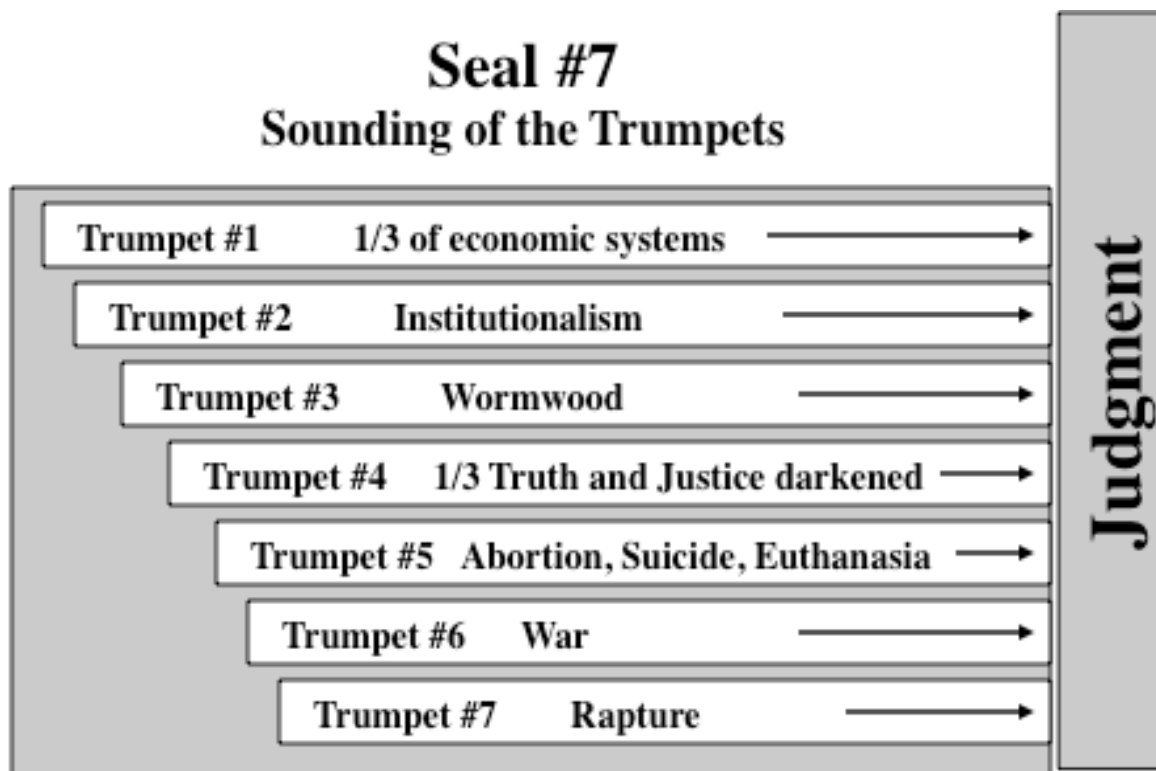


Chart 7.1

unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

10:5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

10:6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take [it], and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10:10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

10:11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

The Little Book

Here is the angel with one foot on all of secular society—on the earth, and the other foot on the sea—on the church. You have the whole planet, both church and state, covered

by the two feet. His hand is reaching up to heaven. That means that He is uniting heaven with the earth and with the sea, with secular society and with the church. All is blended together here. All this comes under the rule of the little book in His other hand.

The angel tells John to eat that little book. That means do not merely read it. That means to study it and make it part of yourself so that it is assimilated through your entire system. All of your thoughts, all of your body, all of your psyche, all of your being is involved in that little book. That little book is the Gospel.

That little book is sweet as honey in the mouth. Justification, the receiving of the gift of eternal life that was purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, is the sweetest thing you will ever eat. You receive that with joy; you bring it in and, "Oh, yeah, it is celebration time."

But there is something afterwards. There is a swallowing involved, and when you swallow it, it is going to take you places you do not want to go. It is going to call for you to be that sacrificial disciple that forsakes all that he has to follow Jesus Christ, and that is a bitter pill.

The Bitterness in Discipleship

The church cannot swallow that bitter pill today because it is not being preached. We need you to be out there modeling, preaching, and teaching this real discipleship. The people need to know that there is a cost to discipleship. The gift of eternal life has no cost for you. You do not pay anything for eternal life. Jesus paid the whole price. It comes to you as a gift, you receive that in your mouth, and it is like honey. But once you swallow it, there is a changing of your character, there is a desire to please the Lord, there is a hunger to hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant,"¹⁵ which will drive you on. You will

go where you do not want to go, and do what you do not want to do, and you will cry, "Lord, I do not want to be here. I don't want to do that."

But what is the alternative? to go against your Lord? You cannot stand that idea. On the one hand you are driven to go with the Lord. On the other hand you do not want to go, you do not want to do it. You have to press on. You have to do it. Here the description of this little book is bitter sweet. Discipleship contains the sweetness of forgiveness and the bitterness of the difficult sacrifices of followship. But it is sacrifice that bears fruit.

John

12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will [my] Father honour.

12:27 Now is my soul troubled; . . .

See, Jesus had the same passions here. It cost Him His life. It costs us the same kind of self-denial—the giving of our lives to Jesus to live through us.

John

12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, [saying], I have both glorified [it], and will glorify [it] again.

12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard [it], said that it thundered: . . .

¹⁵ Matthew 25:21 and 23.

You remember we just got through hearing about the seven thunders. God is speaking in thundering. When you hear it thunder, God is speaking, and I have often listened to the thunder, and I have wondered who on this planet is hearing what God is saying. I keep waiting for that thunder that is for me. Every time it thunders I wonder, "Is it my turn? I am ready. I am listening."

John

12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard [it], said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to him.

12:30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto me.

Now here is the forgotten plan! You must die in order to bear fruit. You cannot bear fruit by standing up here and living your life. The only way is to die. We are talking about dying to self. Your will must be surrendered! If there is no surrender, if you cannot pay the cost of discipleship, then you cannot be a disciple. If you cannot die to self, there is no fruit. The only fruit that counts to your credit is the fruit from discipleship. That is because Jesus does the work only when you are surrendered. You become a vehicle for Him to do His work through you only when you are surrendered. Then He can do something in this world through you. But if it is left up to us, we are going to build ourselves a temporal mansion and have all of our eternal rewards right now.

Tim: When it says, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out," He is saying that we would now be judged, or something else?

V: It is the judgment of the world's system under Satan, the prince of this world. He has been cast down to earth, and the Lord

is fixing to defeat Satan and his system, and Jesus' soul is troubled. He is doing just what I said about discipleship. On the one hand, He cannot do anything but the will of God because He says, "For what did I come here for? This is what I came here for." But on the other hand, He wants to call out, "Do not put me through this!" If He can deny Himself and die to self and let God do His work through Him, the prince of this world will be defeated!

Here is the casting out of Satan and his system from this world. He has already been cast out of heaven. He is down here now, and he is the prince and power of the air. He is down here. He is running amuck, slashing and binding and loosing all of this demonic stuff out of the bottomless pit, doing all of this evil kind of thing.

Now here is the battle. If Jesus can do what He is telling us to do, He is saying, "I am going to give you the model to follow." He set His face for Jerusalem. He knew that He was going to the death. He was going to die, and in His death He was going to bring forth victory. This kind of spiritual warfare is what you are to do too. It is to win spiritually through dying to your physical self.

The Rapture

When this last trumpet sounds, all living believers will be raptured out of the earth. Without the salt and light from the presence of believers, the earth will have no restraints and no more light. Its apostasy will accelerate precipitously.

We have looked at the angel that unites heaven, church, and state. The little book held by the angel is the Gospel. The true disciple is to eat the Gospel. Thus the disciple will be concerned with bringing both church and state under God's rules. The work to accomplish this goal will cost you your lives because only God can accomplish it. You must die to yourself (deny yourself)

follow Jesus (letting Him live His life in your sacrifice) with you at all times.
body) and carry your cross (the altar of

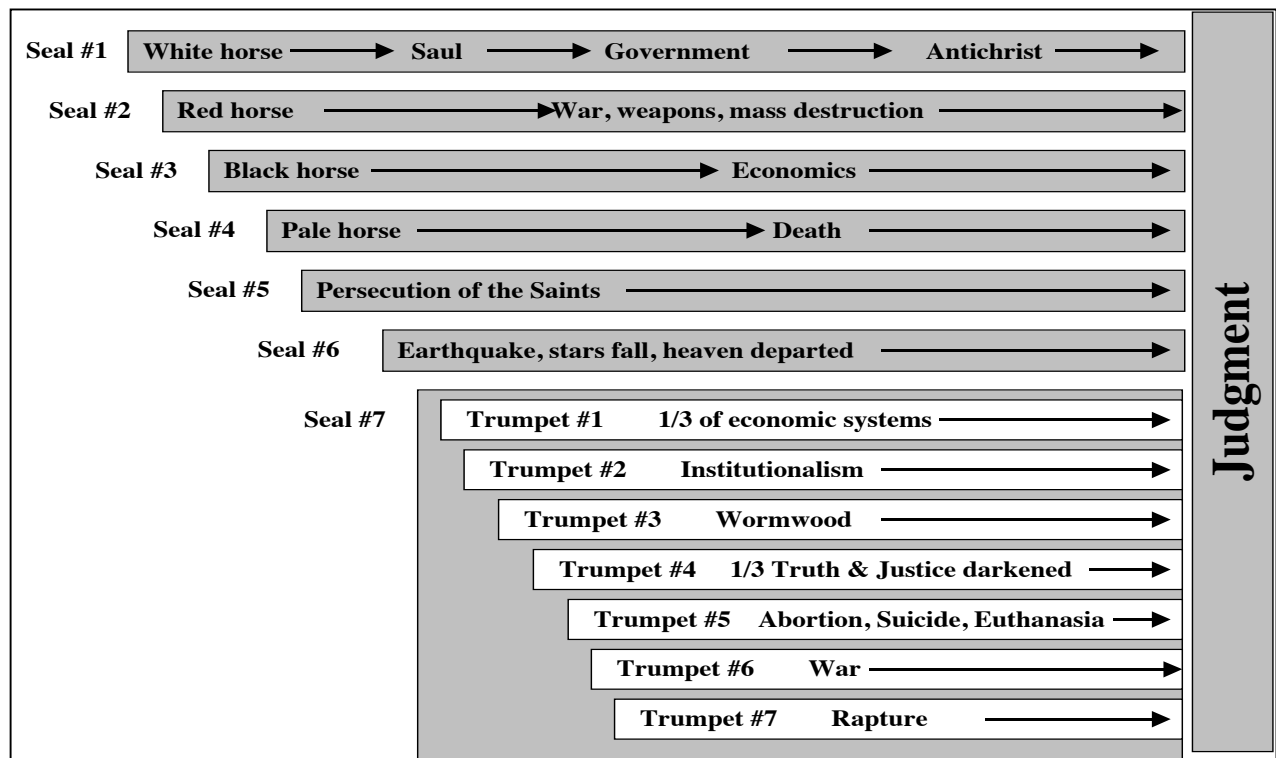


Chart 7.2

Chapter Questions

1. List and describe the trumpets.
2. What are the three woes?
3. Describe the cost of discipleship.
4. What is the Little Book, and what does it mean?

Chapter 8

TWO WITNESSES, RAPTURE, AND ANTICHRIST**REVELATION 11***Measuring The Temple*

Before we get to the Seventh Trumpet we have this part about the measuring of the temple.

Revelation

11:1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

11:2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty [and] two months.

Here is a measuring rod that is going to be used to measure the temple, the Holy Place, and those who worship in that Holy Place. The Greek word *canon* means reed, which is the measuring rod, and the *canon* is the Bible, God's Word. This means that we are going to be measured by God's Word. We are not going to be measured by our own traditions or any other good estimation by man. We are going to be measured by God's Word. That is what we want to look at, and that is what we want to measure up to.

He is, then, going to measure the inner court of the temple and those inside who are worshiping. If you are going to measure up or even be standing there to be measured, you will have to be a true worshipper of Jesus Christ. Being a true worshipper of Jesus Christ means you have to worship in the real temple where the Word of God is the rule.

You should all know by now that the temple of God is your body and true worship is your doing portion of the triangle of piety via actions of your body. What I want to do now is focus on two things: (1) the real worshipper who is going to be measured by

the 'Word of God,' and (2) the false worshipper.

The true worshippers of God are going to be measured. Some of us are going to come up short in areas because we are going to be measured in everything that we are, have, and do, plus every relationship that we have. In every way, we are going to be measured against the Word of God. I am encouraging you to measure up, but you have to know the Word of God in order to measure up.

He says do not even measure those people who are not worshiping in the inner court. In fact, He says, leave them out. In the outer court are the worshippers who have a semblance of true Christianity, and He says, "Do not even waste your time measuring them. Measure them not, and leave them out to be tread under foot by the Gentiles" (Rev. 11:2).

Salt Without Flavor

Matthew 5:13 questions the value of salt that has lost its savor. It is good for nothing but to be cast out and tread under foot. Here is a statement that says that those in the outer court are not to be measured, do not waste your time on them, cast them out, and they will be tread under foot. This means now that the people who have a semblance of Christianity are really hypocrites. They want to have their cake and eat it, too. What they want is to have the blessings of God while doing their own thing. They want to have the blessings of God by having an appearance of Christianity, but in their hearts they want to have their own way and do their own thing. This is not self-denial, folks. When you are doing your own thing, it is not self-denial!

The first requirement of being a disciple is self-denial. What the false worshippers want to do is be disciples without denying them-

selves. This present belief of the church does not work. He says, “Leave them out; do not measure them, and they will be tread under foot.” It is the same as the passage in Matthew that says that salt that has lost its savor has no value.

If you lose your savor . . . Of course, you have your savor built into you as far as your ontology goes, but you can lose your savor when it comes to behavior. When your behavior does not measure up, it is going to be cast out. If your relationships do not measure up, they are going to be cast out. Worshiping in the outer court is not true Christianity, and it is going to be cast out because you have lost your savor in that area. But you (yourself, your being, your body) are going to be saved because once you are born again that is an ontological conversion of you yourself, but you will come into heaven naked. You do not have a crown, you do not have any clothes, and you are disgraceful. There is much at risk here.

Homer: Can you talk to us about doing that measuring?

V: Let us look at Matthew 15.

Matthew

15:7 [Ye] hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with [their] lips; but their heart is far from me.

15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men.

Isaiah issued this complaint against Judah while they were in the midst of revival! He said that God’s people are a bunch of hypocrites when we draw close to the Lord with our mouths, but our hearts are far from Him. What you **do** comes out of your heart, not your mouths.

We are going to be measured in the same way as servants were judged in Matthew 25, the parable of the talents. The saints, the

servants of God are going to be judged, and this is a judgment that is not going to hold anything back. You pastors and your people are going to be judged on what you **do** with your gifts, what kind of profitability you deliver to the Lord your life—was it profit for yourself or for God? If it was for you, you have your reward, and it is over with. If it was for God, it is eternal, and you participate in His rewards for eternity. That is the way it works, and the judgment process is described in Matthew 25.

Measuring Up

In Revelation 11 God is definitely dealing with a situation in which there are two kinds of “Christians.” One kind is measured, every facet of his life, ontology, everything about him is going to be measured against the Word of God, and he will be rewarded where he measures up to God’s Word and suffer loss where he does not measure up. Those who don’t even get measured are those who are hypocritical. Even though they have given lip service, they are not real Christians **in their behavior** (their sanctification that is described in the book of Hebrews), and their hearts are far from Him. That is the group that is going to be left out because they are basically salt that has no flavor.

Homer: In one passage Jesus says, “Not everyone that says, Lord, Lord, will enter My kingdom.”¹ Is this part of the second group?

V: Yes, all of the people in that category would be “Lord, Lord, lip-service Christians.” They would include both lost and saved. The saved in this case, however, are **not doers** of the Word.

Wanda: Are the people in Matthew 5:13 saved?

V: Yes, all Christians are salt. Some of them, however, have lost their flavor. Those who measure up ontologically, even though

¹ Matthew 7:21.

their behavior does not measure up, are saved. They will suffer loss because they are hypocrites (refer to Matthew 15 above).

Jerry: Are the saved hypocrites the ones that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 3:15, "He himself will be saved but as one escaping through the flames"?²

V: Yes. Those are the saved portion in this category of flavorless salt.

Forty-Two Months

Pete: Are the forty-two months literal?

V: I think that the harlot will be trampled underfoot by the entire world for a literal forty-two months. We are not there yet. This is a look forward.

Here is what I would like for you to do: hang onto the forty-two months, 1,260 days, but put it over to the side and see if you cannot draw some conciliation between that and the flow of the story. If we get hung up on this now, we will never get the story.

Jill: What does trodden under foot mean? Does that mean persecution?

V: No, it is despising. The institutional church is going to be despised in the last days. I am not talking about you guys who are real disciples because you are going to be killed or raptured.

TWO WITNESSES ARE CHURCHES

Revelation

11:3 And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

11:4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

11:5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

The two witnesses are churches because the Bible says that they are candlesticks. God said in Revelation 1:21 that candlesticks are churches. Therefore the two witnesses are churches. A lot of people think there are going to be two people and suggest Isaiah, Elijah, Moses or whatever. We have many theories about the candlesticks, but God has already told us that the candlesticks are churches. This Scripture about two candlesticks is about two churches. Guess how many churches did not get reprimanded? Two: Smyrna and Philadelphia because they measure up.

A few of you are Smyrna, and a few are Philadelphia, but most of us are Thyatira, Pergamum, Laodicea . . .

The two witnesses are going to be prophesying for a period of time that is equal to forty-two months. We are holding those numbers now to the side, and we will see if we cannot come up with a harmonization. I will tell you right now though that there are times when I can reconcile, and there are times when I cannot. If any of you come up with some good answers, I would be interested in seeing them.

Fire from the Mouths

Now we are coming to the business of the fire coming out of their mouths and devouring their enemies. And if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

I will define this fire by looking back at Jeremiah who dealt with professional prophets, the school of the prophets who were on the king's payroll. Those are the official prophets. They have been ordained and have official status. They are the profit prophets who are officially recognized in Judah.

² 1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Jeremiah is not an official prophet—he was ordained by God, not the king. Thus his warnings are considered irritants instead of real warnings. Jeremiah does not count. God put His hand on him, and said, “I want you,” and He did that before Jeremiah was even born. Jeremiah did not apply for a job, do a resume, and do all that kind of stuff. He was called in the womb.

Jeremiah had no papers, no credit, and no status. He was just one of these “walk around the streets” kind of guys. But in Jeremiah 5:13 it says,

Jeremiah

5:13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word [is] not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

5:14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

This passage is what God is talking about in Revelation 11:5. He is not talking about flamethrowers. The same analogy has been said before. God told Jeremiah that the paid prophet guys are going to be nothing but wind, and that He was going to make His Words to be fire out of Jeremiah’s mouth to devour the people as wood. Jeremiah’s preaching would devour them. The same analogy is repeated in Revelation.

Revelation

11:5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; . . .

Same words! We cannot take this literally because it is supposed to be understood as signification. God has said clearly to us, “I have given you a hermeneutic, use it. You ought to be able to figure out some of this.”

This, you see, is very clear here. When He talks about killing them, He is not talking about burning them to a crisp, and they fall down into ashes. It is the same kind of killing

that Jeremiah did. When you proclaim the Word of God, it is like a two-edged sword, and it is like fire. It will kill the sinner. God’s words will go straight into the hearts, and the sinners will be sitting there quivering, turning ashen white, breaking out in a cold sweat because the Word of God has power to do that. That is what this scripture is talking about.

Power Over Water

Revelation

11:6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

Now it is time for you to start doing some of this kind of stuff described here because you have the ability to bring rain from heaven. When we say rain from heaven we are not talking about watering somebody’s grass. We are talking about the refreshing rain of the Holy Spirit coming down in the Words of God as you proclaim them. If you shut your mouth, the rain cuts off. Who is going to bring the refreshing, cooling rain if it is not the prophets. The rain will not come if you do not open your mouths. It is time for us to start preaching true discipleship.

If you continue to teach the traditions of man, select the easy scriptures, or couch your hermeneutics in your agenda and use God’s Word to accomplish it, then you will stop the rain. If you should decide that we do not need God’s agenda, just His Word to bring your agenda, then you turn the water into blood. Many men, then, will die.

Joe: The clergy is included there?

V: Not in the dying. His people die from the pastors’ dry sermons. We need to throw off the restraints, open up our mouths, and bring the refreshing rains. We have too much water being turned to blood like the plague in the Exodus.

The plagues are popping up all over the place. We see all manner of things happening in our environment: storms, floods, droughts, locusts. We have locusts all over the place, but I have not heard anybody say, “What is God saying through this invasion of crickets?” They just say, “We are up to our eyeballs in crickets. It seems to be normal for today.”

Beth: As I drove through the parking lot, I could hear them crunching.

V: We cannot even walk without slipping and sliding on some of them. It is time for you to smite the earth with plagues by pointing them out. But if you shut up, all of these lost people are going to say, “Oh, we have a lot of crickets today.”

A tornado came through a town in east Texas on Mothers’ Day several years ago. Nobody was brave enough to say anything about that. Where is the prophet who is willing to warn the mothers about abortion?

Carl: We are afraid to speak out.

V: That is right, we are afraid to speak out. The moon and the sun are darkening. You are the moon. You have lost 1/3 of your light already.

Death for the Two Witnesses

Revelation

11:7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

11:8 And their dead bodies [shall lie] in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

11:9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

11:10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11:11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

11:12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

11:13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

11:14 The second woe is past; [and], behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become [the kingdoms] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

11:16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

11:17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

11:19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

I think these two woes come close together. As soon as Woe #2 is past, Woe #3 is right there. The resurrection of the two dead

churches occurs near the end of Woe #2. They are resurrected and taken up to heaven (woe #2), and we who are alive at the time will be caught up right behind them (Woe #3). The second group comes just a blink behind the first group. That is the rapture, Trumpet #7.

I do not know exactly how to come down on this part about the dead bodies. Do you want to call the bodies the buildings with the steeples on them, or do you want to call them Smyrna and Philadelphia Christian corpses lying out on the sidewalks? God has already decided what the meaning is, and it is our job to find out what He means.

If the churches have gone underground and basically been shut down as a form of death, then their resurrection would then be a re-enlivening or quickening of the corporate bodies. Or it could be literal corpses lying out on the streets. It could be either way, but many saints are going to be dead because Satan is going to come out and wage war against them and kill them. He is already out waging war.

Joe: Is that what you are calling the rapture at that point?

V: No, the rapture is at Trumpet #7. I am about to get there.

Henry: Is this beast the one referred to in Trumpet #5?

V: No, that one is a star, an evil angel.

Tom: In other words you are saying that the souls that are under the altar, these are the ones who have been martyred and are waiting for the completion of the martyrs of the church. The church no longer exists.

V: No, the church still exists because we have in verse 13 a remnant. All right, you Smyrna and Philadelphia guys, you are the ones that get killed. You Pergamos, Thyatira, etc., you get to be affrighted and are the remnant (verse 13). You are the remnant that

are affrighted and give glory to God of heaven. This is a kind of shaking down here, and so it is that remnant bunch that is going to be raptured, but it is that glorious Smyrna and Philadelphia bunch that gets clobbered or killed. That brings us back to where we began this class, where we said who gets what.

TRUMPET #7, THE RAPTURE

Revelation

11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; . . .

Bang, I mean it is right there. As soon as Woe #2 (part of Trumpet #6) is passed, Trumpet #7 sounds.

Revelation

11:15 . . . and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become [the kingdoms] of our Lord, . . .

The declaration of victory is declared right here.

Revelation

11:15 . . . and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

11:16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

11:17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants . . .

That word, servants, is slaves.

Revelation

11:18 . . . the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

11:19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there

were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.

1 Corinthians

15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [must] put on immortality.

15:54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

15:55 O death, where [is] thy sting? O grave, where [is] thy victory?

15:56 The sting of death [is] sin; and the strength of sin [is] the law.

15:57 But thanks [be] to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Where is the last trumpet? Trumpet #7 is the last trump. It marks the rapture.

Joe: I do not know how many times I have read that passage and even read the book of Revelation, but I have been stumbling around here like a blind dog in a meat factory hunting for it but not seeing it.

V: We need to be the Lord's slaves!

Matthew

24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

1 Thessalonians

4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

The dead are First! Then we who are alive, i.e. we lukewarm ones, are caught up.

1 Thessalonians

4:17 Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Sadly, what we want to do is go out with a bang without any costs. We want to be in that group of those two witnesses, those two candlesticks, but we don't want to die with them. That is what we are trying to do here in our comfort zones. We want to live without sacrifice or suffering, be raptured, and have maximum rewards in heaven. We want to be called Smyrna or Philadelphia, but we do not want the circumstances that go with those categories. Please know that everybody must grab hold of the sacrificial life of discipleship and live the *kenosis* in order to be a member of Smyrna or Philadelphia or to be a victorious saint in one of the other churches.

Here is what we have here: we have all the strong Christians of Smyrna and Philadelphia plus the victorious Christians from the other churches being killed and then resurrected from the dead. Then the weak Christians who remain alive are raptured, caught up with those being resurrected. This then is emptying the earth of all remnants of Christian flavor. When that happens there is going to be all kinds of evil that is going to break out unhindered. This evil is going to be the wrath of God that is going to come upon the earth then.

Trumpet #7 is Woe #3. Why is it a woe? Because of the Christian flavor being removed from the earth. This earth without the salt and flavor of the Christian Church is speeding toward self-destruction.

Sybil: That means that the presence of the Holy Spirit is not going to be on earth.

V: No, some people will be saved after this time who will become fugitives under great peril. They will provide even less

restraining flavor from the salt and light as those who were raptured.³

REVELATION 12

This chapter is a sweeping synopsis of history. Revelation 11 began with setting the stage for the two candlesticks, and the war that is going to come against them followed by the trumpeted rapture. There, you are inside of history, but when you get to Revelation 12 you step outside of history and look at a synopsis or a summary of history. It is kind of like a parenthetical statement put in to help you get the overall picture of where we have been and where we are going, and then we will pick up again in history with Revelation 13.

The woman and the child

Revelation

12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

12:2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

12:3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the

earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

12:5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and [to] his throne.

12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days.

This sweeping of history begins with the woman. The woman is Israel. Israel is being pictured here as the birthing mother of Christ. Christ came right straight out of Israel as the child.

Dragon

The dragon, of course, is Satan. Satan has seven heads, which means, in my interpretation of head as nation, and horns are kings or powers. There are seven heads on this dragon. Since seven is the all-inclusive number, all nations are under the dragon including America. You remember how ten is a universal number that extends only through temporal time, but seven means that all “earthly nations” through eternity are going to come under the sway of the dragon.

Ten Horns

The ten horns are the ten powers or ten kings. These ten are all the temporal powers, and they do not go through eternity. A temporal power stops at the end of time. The crowns indicate the power, and they go on the nations at this point. We are going to see that vestment move from the nations to the kings when Antichrist ascends.

Angelic War

Revelation

12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the

³ This removal of Christian influence will have the same effect as the Christians being run out of France. When the Christians were run out of France, then came the French Revolution. Many people had their heads cut off on the guillotine. All of that happened because of the lack of Christian influence for restraint of evil and the promotion of good. Even good people had their heads chopped off. It was indiscriminate anarchy, chaos, and rampant evil. People were shuddering in their boots—who was next? Evil swept the whole nation because of the purging of the Huguenots, by the French authorities. When they ran the Huguenots out, then there was nothing left but chaos and the French Revolution. That was a woe to France when the Christians were removed. The woe to the world in the book of Revelation will come with the rapture.

dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

12:8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, . .

We have seen that casting out before, right?

12:9 . . . that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Remember the fig tree and the figs coming down? Here it is. This is a sweeping view of history here in one chapter. We have seen some of this already over in one of the seals, but here again is a sweeping view of history.

Revelation

12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

The scene is of a war in heaven. Michael and the good angels are fighting against Satan and the bad angels, and Satan and his angels lose and are cast into the earth. They no longer have access to God in heaven. They have been cast onto earth. This then catches back to where we were when we dealt with the figs dropping out of the trees, one third of the stars falling down onto earth. Here is that event. They are down here where we are. There is going to be a war down here then.

There was a war in heaven. Satan and his angels fought against Michael and his angels. Michael won and kicked them out. They came down here, angry. They are going to fight some more. Who is going to fight against them? We are. The church. Guess who is going to win? The church for a while,

for the church is going to overcome Satan using two weapons, the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony.

Spiritual Weapons

That is all you have. You do not fight with guns or knives. You do not have any kind of carnal weapons. You cannot escape by calling for the mountains to fall down upon you, *i.e.* escaping through institutionalism. You are going to win with these two spiritual weapons: the blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony. That is it. That is all you have. The method of your warfare, however, is quite strange because it is going to be with reckless abandonment. Look at the end of verse 11: “and they loved not their lives unto the death.” That means that you are going to yield your life to the Lord. Your fight is a sacrificial fight. This is the life of the *kenosis*, the life of sacrifice, a life of self-denial, *i.e.* discipleship.

Satan will have free reign except where the church is whipping up on him. The church is going to be beating the stew out of this guy for a while.

Paul: Zechariah 4:6 is the Scripture that comes to my mind about spiritual weapons.

Zechariah

4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This [is] the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

V: Spiritual warfare is to be conducted by using spiritual weapons. If you are going to have a chance against Satan, it has to be by using spiritual weapons. You do not have a chance if you go against him with carnal weapons. You can have all the weapons and money and power and position and all the temporal stuff that you want, but you will not have a chance against Satan. But you can tear him out of the frame if you are using spiritual weapons.

Joe: The fire of the mouth.

Homer: Paul says that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but it is against the spiritual powers and principalities in the heavenly realm.⁴ That heavenly armor⁵ that we put on . . .

V: Yes, this is the war we are in.

Beth: Is this fight, that is breaking out, during the future tribulation time?

V: No, ma'am. It is right now. This is the sweep of history. We are in tribulation already though most of us do not know it. The Laodicean bunch do not know it because they think everything is made for enjoyment. But Smyrna knows it. Philadelphia knows it. Pergamos and the rest of them are still wondering about it, and they are still looking around thinking that they will be exempt because of the rapture.

Satan's Time is Short

Revelation

12:12 Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

From the time he gets thrown out of heaven, Satan realizes that his time is short. He has been down here for a while, and he has been fighting against us. The longer he fights, and the more you deal him a blow, the angrier he gets. He has already lost one war, and God's Word says he is going to lose the final war. In the present war, we are just scrapping away trying to bring glory to the Lord using spiritual weapons and fighting the same way Jesus did. Victory for a Christian

⁴ Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places].

⁵ Ephesians 6:13-17.

soldier is through death? You die to self to win. A carnal person of Satan's stripe kills to win. A spiritual person dies via the *kenosis*. True discipleship is the only path to victory.

The Woman

Revelation

12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman . . .

The woman is Israel.

12:13 . . . which brought forth the man [child].

12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

Many interpret this time, times, and half a time as three and a half years. This is not that kind of time. This is *kairotic* time, *kairos*. *Kairotic* time is vertical time. See chapter 1 of this book. These are special times in which the Lord God Himself intervenes in the history of mankind, into our affairs. This is what *kairotic* time is. This time is not horizontal time, *chronos*. It is vertical time.

Kairos is this intervention into the affairs of man by God Himself. Time, times, and half a time are special interventions of God in the sustaining of Israel. I do not know what the half of a *kairos* is, unless it is God's dealings with Israel after Christ's advent.

The Flood of Satanic Religion

Revelation

12:15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

Water is religion. You know how we have been dealing with water. The sea is the church. Fresh water, the springs, the fountains of waters, and the creeks are the clergy. The flood of water out of Satan's mouth is Islam and other false religions.

Islam is poured out along with other religions, and guess who stops it? The earth, the secular world swallows up this religion that is antagonistic to Israel by unintentionally becoming a barrier between Islam and Israel. The rulers of the earth have inadvertently rescued Israel by saving themselves.

The dragon wanted to flood the woman and destroy her with false religion. When that did not work, what did he do?

Revelation

12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Christians are the woman's seed. He comes at you. In the sweep of history, Satan's war has to do with the woman who is the central point. The child, Jesus, comes out of the woman, and the remnant of her seed is you. The dragon is one of the main players. All of this warfare that was in heaven came to earth against the woman. Now it is on earth against the church that is fighting with spiritual weapons.

REVELATION 13

Antichrist: The Beast from the Sea

Revelation

13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, . . .

V: What is the sea?

Joe: The church.

V: Antichrist is coming out of the church. He is rising up out of the sea.

Ten Horns on Seven Heads

Revelation

13:1 . . . having seven heads and ten horns, . . .

Heads, now, are nations

13:1 . . . and ten horns, . . .

So he has universal power, the ten horns, but it is limited to time. He has universal nationality that goes through eternity, i.e. the seven heads go through eternity. The heads are eternal, but the horns are temporal.

Crowns Upon the Horns

Revelation

13:1 . . . and upon his horns ten crowns, .

..

Revelation 12:3 has the crowns upon the heads, but now the crowns are on the horns. You remember that we talked about as you grow into the likeness of Christ how He will give you more and more responsibility, and soon He will trust you to use your own judgment, and He does not tell you every little thing to do? He expects you to be a warrior and have the mind of Christ and to live the *kenosis*. That should work its way out into even your smaller actions. As He trusts you to do that, and you perform those little things and meet His expectations, that is trusting you with a little. In eternity He is going to trust you with a ton. That same maturation process occurs with Satan's people.

Satan Uses Nations

Satan gives glory and power to the nations as he gains their cooperation. He distributes his demons over the nations to work within the populations. They are working to gather people to cooperate and put somebody of like mind in charge. If they can get somebody in charge of a nation like Ayatollah Khomeini, Saddam Hussein, Ahmadinejad, or Putin, it will guarantee that the nation and its citizens follow Satan, then he can redistribute those

demons from that nation into a democratic society of another nation so that he can bring to bear individual persecution on those freedom-loving citizens that are giving him trouble.

Satan Gets the Nation Through the King

Satan is working hard to acquire horns, leaders of nations, because it is through the nations that he is now working. He is working hard to consolidate the nation's power into a horn. Once he gets a nation under the power of a horn, then he can concentrate on the spots giving him the most trouble because they are not yet politically correct.

One demon can be assigned to the horn of a nation. Satan can then take the rest of the demons and bring them over to America. He is able to assign hordes of demons to each Christian. No matter what that Christian does, they are going to be right there with him tormenting him, injecting ideas designed to trip him, tempting him, and troubling him all day and all night. No matter what that Christian does, they are just going to beat on him in all things at all times.

Satan achieves success in this passage by bringing his person up out of a morass of candidates to become that one horn. Satan becomes proud of that horn that he has groomed for the job because of his obedience, just like Jesus is so proud of you when you are obedient. Satan puts a crown of authority on that leader, which gives him earthly authority to have the mind of Satan and to do the will of Satan, which is the opposite of the *kenosis*.⁶ His actions are to climb up and indulge himself and help the people to climb up and indulge themselves. Like him, the people will have no integrity. Everyone will lie, make up all the things to support their narcissism, do whatever they want to do, and call it all good. That is what is happening

here—Revelation 12:3–13:1. You can see the transition of how the crown moves from the head, which is a nation, to the horn, which is a national leader.

Revelation

13:1 . . . and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

Now when a satanic horn gains power over the nation, the nation's name will become blasphemy.

Description of Antichrist

Revelation

13:2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as [the feet] of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

This beast is going to be, I believe, a person who is going to be the head horn of all the horns who are each heading up a nation. There will be, then, this world ruler who is going to rule over all the nations in the world. In Daniel you can see the fight that is going to break out between the ten horns,⁷ and there are going to be three of them uprooted by a little horn as they compete among themselves to find out who will be the head horn. The head horn is going to be this beast that comes up out of the sea. He is going to be a little horn, which means he is going to be insignificant and have the appearance of being benign and meek and mild and a very wonderful, sweet-spirited person, not a war-type person. This wonderful, nice, lovely person will take over, and he is going to be the head horn after he uproots those three horns. He is going to pull them out by the roots.

Like a Leopard

This beast is going to be like a leopard, but he is going to have the feet of a bear and

⁶ See Chapter 2 to see an illustration of the Opposite of the *kenosis*.

⁷ Daniel 7.

the mouth of a lion. I watched a documentary on leopards. I thought leopards were a lightning fast kind of animal that attacked fiercely. They are not like that at all. Leopards are stalking. The leopard is very patient. The impala, its prey, has two long horns that are razor sharp. When stalking the impala, the leopard got a tree between himself and the impala and would slowly and carefully move closer to the impala. When the impala moved out from behind the tree, the leopard had to wait for the wind to blow the grass so it could move when the grass moved. If he moved when the grass was still, the impala would see the isolated movement and be alerted to him. It took an hour for the leopard to get close enough to spring upon the impala. The leopard never was able to spring because the impala was facing the leopard, and the leopard would have impaled himself on those long, razor-sharp horns. He kept waiting for the impala to turn, but the impala never turned away long enough to assure victory for the leopard.

That documentary changed my entire understanding of leopards. I thought leopards were like cheetahs or lions or cougars, just tear out after something and got them via speed. God described the Antichrist like a leopard. He is going to stalk, he is going to be very cautious, and you are not going to discern his advancing toward you because he is going to move with the moving environment so that you cannot detect him. It is like the grass. When the wind is blowing, and the grass moves, he will move. Antichrist will move in conjunction with other things happening so that you cannot discern his stalking you. He is coming after you, folks.

Feet of a Bear and Mouth of a Lion

Antichrist has the feet of a bear, which means he can crush you with a single blow. He has the mouth of a lion and that has a horrifying roar to it, but worse than that is the bite. The lion can kill with a single bite. This, then, is how God describes the Antichrist, the little horn. This little horn is going to be this kind of stalking, awesomely powerful, and totally destructive kind of person. He is going to be given all of his power, his seat, and great authority by Satan himself. Satan is just going to pour power on this one man and give him the authority to use it. Satan will give him his seat, his power, and all authority over the whole world.

Joe: With the description of the leopard as being a stalker, the Antichrist may be out there right now stalking.

V: He sure could. There is a candidate for the Antichrist in every generation because Satan does not know when the end will come. That antichrist for our generation may become **the** Antichrist of the Bible to usher in the end. He may be stalking and springing on the unsuspecting right now, looking to see how to become a horn and which horns he is going to defeat in order to consolidate his power.

Now I am going to shock you: the Antichrist is not going to know he is the Antichrist. He is going to come out of the sea.

Jerry: He is deceived?

V: Yes, the Antichrist is more deceived than you are. He is coming out thinking that he is following God. He thinks that he is right and that we are a wrong-minded, exclusive bunch of hate mongers. Smoke that one for a while, folks. He will have a messianic complex.

Jack: So you are saying this man is coming out of some kind of a church, and people are going to think that he is a saint.

V: He will be just like Judas.

Oscar: There is that Scripture that says there will come a time when man will think he is serving God.⁸

V: When he kills you, a true Christian, he will think that he is serving God.

Wounded Head

Revelation

13:3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

The head is a nation that is wounded to death, and we are going to find out later that it is a blow by a sword. That means that in some kind of war, the nation is thought to be completely done, but it is going to come back to life. Now what nation is it? Is it Germany from WWII or Russia from the cold war? Germany has played such a tremendous role in all of church history. Or it could be the Roman Empire which, of course, has died. Most of our theologians say that it will be the rebirth of the Roman Empire that is going to be healed.

Who would have ever thought that the Iron Curtain would come down, and the wall of Berlin would come down. You wonder, "How did that happen?" So which country is it? Is it one of them, or is there another one yet to be wounded by the sword and restored to life?⁹

Tim: How about Russia?

V: It could be Russia. Look at how Russia was killed by the cold war. It could be. I have often thought that it was, but ever

⁸ John 16:2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

⁹ Could it be America that is wounded in economic warfare and be reborn as a Christianless nation being led by the little horn?

since I started rethinking about Germany, I do not know. Germany was prominent in the Reformation, and if it had not been for Germany, Christianity would have been stamped out. Germany led in the establishment of the Reformation. It could lead in the deformation.

Joe: All through history almost all of your so-called Holy Roman Emperors were German.

V: You are right. Charlemagne was one of the greatest.

Betty: Could the descriptions up there of the leopard, bear, and lion be descriptions of the country?

V: I suppose that they could describe the head (nation) prior to the rise of the little horn (king) to power.

Betty: Germany is considered the leopard. Russia is considered the bear, and Great Britain is the lion.

V: Wow! That is pretty good. Put that in your paper, Betty.¹⁰

Satan Gives His Power to Antichrist

Revelation

13:4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who [is] like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

13:5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty [and] two months.

We have the forty-two months, the 1,260 days, to deal with here.

Jerry: The temple is supposed to be restored for forty-two months also is it not?

¹⁰ Everyone in this class had to write a paper giving their interpretation of the seven seals, trumpets, and bowls. They also had to interpret other symbols as well.

V: We have to deal with the temple also because we have not dealt with the temple yet.

I feel comfortable with all the forty-two month passages being a literal number except in the sweep of history in Revelation 12. In the sweep of history and its 1,260 days of Israel's existence, I do not know how to do that. I see Israel being in the dispersion at that time, and that was certainly more than 1,260 days. That could be 1,260 years. I do not know how to reconcile all these numbers, but I do not have to since all of you are going to help me do this, right? If I can introduce the question in your minds, you will not get any sleep at night until you get it figured out.

Wanda: We can just call you at 4 a.m.

V: No, no. That is not good! (Laughter everywhere.)

Antichrist Wars with the Saints

Revelation

13:6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

13:7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, . . .

The killing of the saints, and the rapture of what was left has already occurred at this point; now we have some more saints. Saints will be saved during this period of time in which Antichrist is reigning.

Revelation

13:7 . . . and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

During Antichrist's rule, the whole world is going to worship him except for those who have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. They do not worship him. They will

be killed, tortured, or whatever Antichrist prescribes, but they will not sign up. Like us before them, they are not going to take the mark.

Can You Hear This Message?

Revelation

13:9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

Now we have been hearing that refrain all through Revelation, especially over there in the churches. We have to have some ears here. I think you need to start laying some land mines to get people saved after you are killed or raptured. You see, there are going to be people saved. These saints have got to come from somewhere. They are not leftover Christians after the rapture of Trumpet #7 and all of the deaths of Trumpet #6, which is a world war that results in one-third of mankind being killed. These saints are going to get saved here when there are no Christians left. That means nothing but Bibles and tracts and your testimony and life history that you have left behind will be used by the Holy Spirit to persuade the hearts of unsaved people. They are going to be pondering your words: "What did he mean? How could he go to the death just believing in somebody he could not even see! How can that be?"

That same question came up during the time of Rome when the saints went to their death in the arena with the lions, to their being burned at the stake, to their being tortured and mutilated. The people watched that and said, "How can that be?" The seed of revival is the blood of the saints. When they see your blood, and your testimony is residing down in their hearts, they are going to do the same thing that Menno Simons did.

Menno Simons was a Roman Catholic Priest of high standing. His career and financial life was already secured. He saw 350 Anabaptists who confessed their faith in Jesus Christ, and they were stormed, surrounded, and slaughtered. Every man was

slaughtered because not one of them would recant his faith in Jesus Christ. Menno Simons looked at that and said, “Why are they willing to die? Do they not know that they can put their faith in the church, and they can be saved?” He pondered that, and the thought would not let him go because they died for their testimony. Here he is with his faith in the church. Their faith was in Christ. What is the difference? He thought that if you put your faith in the church, it was in Christ. What did they die for? Eventually he surrendered to Christ and became an Anabaptist himself. He spent the rest of his life on the run, and he never spent more than two nights in the same bed. When he was old and crippled he wrote a letter, and he said, “Is there any saint out there that can relieve my suffering? I am cold, I am hungry, and I have no home.” He died of deprivation as an old

man. He spent his whole life running for his life. That is the way it is going to be with these saints. They are going to be running for their lives from Antichrist.

We have had these stories of tribulation all through history, and there are people today who say, “Oh, tribulation is for the future only. We are not going to have any tribulation. We are going to escape tribulation.” Well, why did not all these people in history escape tribulation? Why are these saints here in this passage of Revelation being killed? Why were these two churches destroyed and all the members killed? How did they get out of tribulation? By dying! That is how you get out of tribulation.

If you have an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Chapter Questions

1. Discuss measuring the temple.
2. Identify the two witnesses.
3. What is the fire from the mouths of the two witnesses?
4. When is the rapture?
5. Identify the woman.
6. Identify the child.
7. Identify the dragon.
8. What is the flood of water?
9. Identify the Beast from the sea.
10. What are heads and horns?
11. What is the measuring rod of the temple?
12. Those people who have a semblance of Christianity are in truth _____.
13. In Revelation 11, the two witnesses are churches because they are called _____.
14. The flames that come out of the mouth of the two witnesses refers to _____ just as the “two-edged sword” refers to the words that come from the Lord.
15. Explain the meaning of Revelation 11:6: “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will” as it applies to the Christian.

Chapter 9

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

REVELATION 13

Two Approaches to Chapters 12–14

Before we go to new Scripture, I want to suggest two approaches to Revelation 12, 13, and 14 to you. You remember that in Revelation 12 we had the survey of history, and it is a sweeping approach about how Israel was attacked by Satan, the war in the heavens, and the devil and all his angels being cast out. Then Satan attacks the remnant of the woman's seed, the faithful ones that believe in and obey Jesus Christ. Following right on the heels of that we have the opening of Revelation 13 that has the beast coming up out of the sea. After that comes the beast coming up out of the earth.

That is our starting point tonight. Following those events of the beasts coming up, though, we have Revelation 14 that will be a review of the 144,000 of converted Jews, then the announcement of the falling of Babylon, and the thrusting in of the sickle to reap the harvest.

Survey Includes Chapters 12–14

If you take Revelation 12, 13, & 14 as a block, then the summary of history becomes much longer. We know that Revelation 12 is a sweeping approach of history to survey what has been going on through the ages, and then the rising of the beasts. Verse 17 of Revelation 12 has the dragon waging war on the remnant, and then the beast comes up out of the sea.

Survey Stops in Chapter 13

In the first alternative understanding, the rising of the beasts could be part of that survey of history. On the other hand, the survey of history could cut off with the war being waged against the remnant by the devil

and the demons. If that is the case, then the beast coming up out of the sea follows Trumpet #7 in the continuance of the book's overall historical chronology. You would have, then, the trumpets with Trumpet #7 being the last one, which signifies the rapture. The beast coming up out of the sea would mean then, that the Antichrist would not be known until after the rapture.

Looking at it the other way, the trumpets would go along to Trumpet #7, and the announcement of the rapture, then there is the survey of history which reaches way back in time to the beginning of Israel and walks forward all the way through the beast coming up out of the sea, the beast coming out of the earth, the 144,000, and the mark of the beast as a survey of history. The picking up of chronology again would begin with the bowls.

I want you to see that there are two ways you can look at this. Depending upon the way that you choose, you will make some determinations. If you choose to have chronology pick back up again in Revelation 13, then we can all breathe a sigh of relief because we will not be here when the Antichrist arises out of the sea.

Tim: So you are talking about a pre-trib or post-trib rapture.

V: No, please understand that we are in the tribulation right now. However, it is just not at its highest intensity that it will eventually grow into. We are trying to understand the placement and length of the passage, which is the survey of history. That will then determine where the rapture and the rise of Antichrist will occur in the chronology.

Pete: My question is backing up a little. We studied about the angel having a foot on the earth and a foot on the sea. Is that indicating the one-world religion?

V: No. That unites the church and state under the authority of God's Word in the Little Book. But now I have introduced a chronological issue for you to resolve.

Joe: To summarize then what you are saying in simplified form, if you just put the chronology of Revelation 12 by itself, that would be a rapture before the Antichrist?

V: Yes.

Mary: But if you take them together, then we lose the chronology of the rapture?

V: Yes.

Rapture Occurs at Last Trumpet

The only chronological certainty of what we have in this chronology of the rapture is that it will not be before the last trumpet. God specifically said that. If, then, God stops His chronology with trumpet #6 and puts the last trumpet in his sweeping review of history, we lose the chronological linkage to trumpet #7 (the rapture) in connection with the rise of Antichrist. God reaches back from Israel and He goes all the way to the fall of Babylon in Revelation 14. If that is the survey of history, then the rising of Antichrist is just somewhere within that survey. It does not place it chronologically after Trumpet #7 specifically.

The survey of history is not event oriented as closely as the seals and the trumpets and the bowls. Those are very precise; they have a very punctiliar beginning point, and you can begin to locate them. But this sweeping survey is very general, and it covers many centuries. Where, in the sweeping view of history, the Antichrist actually arises, we do not know. We just know that it is after Satan begins to wage war against the remnant. That is all we know. To summarize, if the survey of history covers the rise of Antichrist, then we cannot determine the specific location of Antichrist's rising in regard to Trumpet #7. However, if the survey ends before the rise of Antichrist, then he arises after the Rapture.

I think that God left that chronology indeterminable in order to keep us alert in our looking for Antichrist. If we knew that Antichrist would come only after the rapture, then we would relax our guard.

Carnal Weapons

Steve: In verse 10 in Revelation 13 it says:

13:10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

That is referring to false teachers, right?

V: No. It is referring to the wrong way to wage war back against Satan. You see we cannot defeat Satan with carnal weapons. Using the sword will be very tempting as you approach the end times. When Satan mounts an attack against you, it is going to be a two-pronged attack, i.e. physical and spiritual. The physical attack will be political correctness to be enforced by armed troops. They will send to get you politically incorrect Christians the same way they did with Jesus. However, the spiritual prong will be to get you to believe the goodness of political correctness. If you are going to have a chance against Satan, it has to be through patience and faith as it says in the verse you cited, "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." Your faith must get you victory over political correctness, and your patience must get you victory in the physical death.

Patience

Remember what I said about patience. It is being under the burden, and settling in your heart that you are going to go the distance even if it includes martyrdom. In order to endure the physical death, you should not have this debate raging in your mind as it draws near and bears down on you: Why must I die? Does God want me to die? Should I speak out if my testimony will cost

me my life? You must settle it in your heart that you are going to speak a word for the Lord no matter what it costs. Just settle it in your heart. The patience is enduring the death.

The faith that we all will need will come from being able to see across the chasm in the *kenosis* (see Chart 9.1). Remember that you must look across to the other side of the grave in order to see the glory and the resurrection and the exaltation for your lifeline to self-denying faith. Patience is going down in sacrifice, and faith is seeing your sacrifice as the requisite for a future going up in glorification. *(Please read this paragraph several times).*

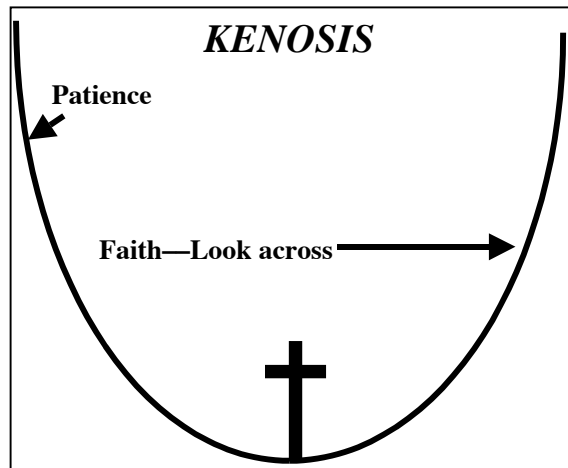


CHART 9.1

Escapist Rapture?

Wanda: Nearly everybody is saying that the saints will be raptured out. Now you indicate that other people are getting saved in the tribulation. My understanding of the restrainer is that it is the church and it will be raptured out. I see that these people under the altar that have been beheaded were beheaded during the tribulation because they did not go in the rapture. How did they get saved?

V: This church-is-the-restrainer idea is a tradition that has been taught and grounded into our brains, and that tradition comes from the idea that we are too good to have to suffer

tribulation. The idea that the saints will not go through tribulation is a deception! Many saints are being tortured and killed right now.

The deception is effected via myopia and narcissism. Many of our forefathers have had to suffer being tortured to death. There are people today suffering for their testimony. We need to re-evaluate all of that suffering, and quit looking at future history in terms of escapism. Escapism creates lukewarm saints with self-centered mentalities.

A lukewarm saint who is uncommitted and not willing to hold up that burden in patience cannot know what I am talking about when I say, “You settle it in your heart and be willing to go all the way to the death.” They cannot hear what I am saying here because they are brainwashed into thinking, “I am just going to live and have a good time. It is all roses for me, and then I am out of here. It will be all those other sorry people that did not get saved that are going to go through the tribulation.” They think, “It will not be me.”

Escapism is a wrong approach to this issue. You must see that there is not going to be any rapture prior to the last Trumpet. That is a given. God said that. I look in the Bible for trumpets. I find the last one, and guess what. That is where the rapture is. It certainly is not before the last trumpet. Therefore, if you look prior to Trumpet #7, you will find a whole pile of people being martyred. What are you going to do with that tribulation? You have to get tough and suck it up, hang in there, and do the re-evaluation.

If you put your whole life on want-to’s, dreams, and yearnings in your heart to escape all the troubles, what is going to happen to you when the trouble hits, and Antichrist demands all citizens to take the mark for all financial transactions. You will be under the impression that the Antichrist cannot be THE Antichrist because the rapture has not occurred and this tribulation cannot be THE tribulation. You will conclude then that this

mark cannot be THE mark that God warned us about. Thus, you could, under false suppositions, conclude that the mark is harmless and necessary.

Fighting with Spiritual Weapons

Steve: It would do us all well to really go in and study that 6th chapter of Ephesians where Paul talks about the spiritual battle in the heavenly armor because that lays out our battle plan, our weapons, our everything. We need to know our plan and weapons to endure suffering.

V: Yes, and tie that right in here because this is how we are going to fight. If we do not fight with the spiritual weapons, folks, we are going to get clobbered. The worst possible defeat would be to take the mark of the beast in order to save our physical lives.

Having set the stage for how you want to interpret this, your interpretation will establish whether you are looking to see the Antichrist. Are you looking and being careful and cautious in your walk? Or are you being careless and taking for granted, that everything is going to be all right, and you are going to be out of here before the Antichrist and all his terrible troubles arrive? It depends upon how you see this survey of history. The way I am looking at it is that I attach the rising of the Antichrist and the rising of the False Prophet in the survey of history, not in the *chronos* of the events as we have studied to this point. That is where I come down. You do not have to come down there. Please know that your grades will not be affected whether you agree with me or not. However, your lives will be affected.

Beast Out of the Earth (The False Prophet)

Now we will get back to Revelation 13.

Revelation

13:11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

13:12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13:13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by [the means of] those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

13:15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

13:16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

13:17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number [is] Six hundred threescore [and] six.

We will skip verse 18 for right now because that is very difficult. The two horns of verse 11 are two men. The False Prophet is going to be a person in charge of the two areas of education and journalism: both are things that have to do with words and belief. This beast is going to have a benign, gentle appearance like a lamb, but he is going to speak like a dragon. That means his words are going to betray him. Listen to the words! Do not look at the countenance; do not look at the gentleness; listen to the words. The words of journalism and education are the words that

are shaping society and bringing society around so that it will be politically correct and ready and willing and desiring to worship the first beast.

False prophecy like that is already being propagated around the world, folks. It is geared to produce political correctness by getting the Antichrist in power and getting the population to conform.

Mark of the Beast

There are people today taking the mark. Let me tell you something: people who are agreeing with political correctness are taking the *spiritual* mark on the forehead when they agree with it. They are then encouraged to act on their political correctness. Agreeing with it is taking the spiritual mark on the forehead, and acting upon it is taking the spiritual mark on the hand. People are today taking the invisible mark on the head or on the hand or on both. They will be ready, willing, and desirous of a physical mark to follow that up. They will be first in line, and they will turn you in if you resist or give a testimony to your faith. You need to see this, now!

False Prophet

The dragon gives his power to Antichrist. At this point, Antichrist will have all the power, wealth, prestige, charisma, and everything that the dragon can pass on to him. It is the same kind of stuff that Satan tried to entice our Lord with when he said, "Bow down to me, and I will give you all these nations."¹ Satan has that capability to bestow power and wealth. He is going to give it to this man who is the Antichrist. The Antichrist is going to turn around and give power to the False Prophet. The False Prophet is going to be a minister to Antichrist by bringing the devotion of the world's population to him.

¹ Luke 4:5-8.

Taking the Mark

The False prophet will use education and journalism, the two horns, to bring the world's devotion to pass. There is going to be, then, a stress on taking the mark. Here is the way it is going to go if you do not get the mark: it will first be a passive kind of take the mark. It will be a campaign of television, education, newspapers, magazines, books, art, and everything else included in journalism to be persuading the people to voluntarily take the mark. They will tell you to get in line, go on down, get your mark, and show your allegiance to the king. Those who have the invisible mark are going to get in there as fast as they can to get the visible mark and show it off with pride as the "reasonable" people. They have taken the mark, and it is making the world operate so much better. Next, buying and selling will be limited to those with the visible mark.

Then that group of people that have been holding out because they know something about the book of Revelation will reason that they are being forced to take the mark because the Lord does not want them to suffer and die. They will excuse their choice by claiming that they were forced to take the mark. Do not make this mistake. That would be a deliberative choice that would put you under the curse stated in the book of Revelation.²

Joe: Dr. Vinson, if you are held down and branded with it, that is not taking it; is it?

² Let me tell you what forced to take the mark is. That is when a team of people come and grab you, throw you down, tie your hands and feet down, and hold your head down, then they brand you against your will while you are kicking and screaming for all you are worth. That is a forced mark, but when they say, "If you do not take the mark, you are going to die," and you say, "Okay, I am going to take the mark, but it is forced on me." That is not forced! That is a voluntary "yes." That is a choice.

V: You are correct, Joe. However, *if your will is bent* by any kind of persuasion (including the threat of suffering and death for you or a loved one), then *that is choice*.

False Revival

II Thessalonians

2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for [that day shall not come], except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

There is the present-day looking for revival. The church is looking for revival. You need to see that revival is going to come, but it is going to be a false revival. That false revival is going to be something opposite of the true *kenosis*, and the church is going to praise the Lord for this wonderful revival. That is how Satan operates! He offers you power and wealth for your allegiance. Counterfeit revival is coming.

The closer we come to Antichrist himself, the more false revival is going to begin sweeping the land. There is going to be the trading in of the faithful, patient endurance for emotional, carnal satisfaction. People are going to get goose bumps and holler, "Oh, this is a wonderful revival." We are already trading in the hard-nosed, self-denying, cross-bearing following of Jesus that is required of a true disciple for a self-centered, flesh pleasing upside down *kenosis*.

Discipleship costs you greatly.³ Do not trade discipleship in for the false revival. Do not get swept up in the hysteria of all the wonderful church services and claims that Christ is here or over there. Don't let your emotions and goose bumps become the

evidence that Christ has arrived because you can feel Him.

I do not want all of you trading in true discipleship and going with all this hysterical stuff that is being passed off as revival because there is nothing that counts except self-denying, cross-bearing followship. That is revival. It will be with tears running down your cheeks and a hurting in your gut and fear and trembling as you go.

Oscar: Professor, you are saying some things that are very, very frightening, and the reason why is that they are contemporary.

V: The book of Revelation not only covers the future, but also it covers the past and the contemporary.

Bob: We are in this class for a reason. If each one of us can take this message out to our people and can turn a few, they might be able to turn a few too!

V: Yes, that is the principle of multiplication.

Ted: I told my 20-year old son that if taking the mark is ever required to eat, then your choice must be to die.

V: Amen! Get your loved ones committed.

Jill: Bob said earlier that we are not in here accidentally. We do not know what we are being prepared for but ultimately we need to tell somebody else. Ezekiel says that we will have the blood of the people on our hands if we do not blow the trumpet of warning.

V: We have to get our people ready.

Son of Perdition (The Man of Lawlessness)

II Thessalonians

2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

³ I want you to know that when Jesus faced the cross, He wept, He sweated, He was in agony, and guess who was there. The Father was there, and the angels were there nurturing Him and giving Him strength to go through it.

Now this is the son of perdition who is revealed. This parallels the Antichrist in Revelation 13 where the False Prophet, using the two information methods of education and journalism, is going to promote the worship of this son of perdition.

II Thessalonians

2:5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

The Restrainer

2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

There is something stopping the son of perdition right now. That something is not the Holy Spirit because if the Holy Spirit is going to stop him, he is stopped. However, this son of perdition is progressing, but the “he” has not yet stepped onto the world’s scene openly as of right now. We do not know who “he” is. We can have suspicions, but we do not know who “he” is. There is coming a time, though, when we will know, but it is only after that which is holding him back is pulled away. According to verse 6, something is holding him back.

II Thessalonians

2:7 For the mystery of iniquity . . .

The word iniquity means *lawlessness*.

II Thessalonians

2:7 . . . doth already work: only he who now letteth [will let], until he be taken out of the way.

Let me give you my theory of the restrainer. The restrainer has a masculine ending, so the restrainer is masculine. The Bible says that it is “he,” but it is an impersonal “he.” Since the son of perdition is called the “lawless one” and the mystery of “lawlessness” is what is at work, then I think that it is **law** that is restraining the lawless one while the mystery of “lawlessness” is at work. It is **law** that is restraining **lawlessness**.

Law is masculine. The Greek word “*Anomos*” (lawless one) ends in “os” which is masculine. If you were going to substitute a pronoun in Greek for law (*nomos*), it would be “he” instead of “it.” So I think that *what is holding back lawlessness is law*. I know that it cannot be the church because it is a feminine word. It cannot be the Holy Spirit because its gender is neuter. If I am right that it is the law, then friends we are closer than you ever dreamed because law is quickly deteriorating. Our Constitution is being shredded before our very eyes.

Sybil: Darkening of truth and justice?

V: Yes! Our Constitution provides truth and justice which form a barrier to darkening.

Antichrist Revealed

II Thessalonians

2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2:9 [Even him], whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Now watch this next verse.

II Thessalonians

2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

We have to hang onto the truth. Our pleasure must be in righteousness! We have to be focused on the banner of Jesus Christ. If we allow any of this lawlessness to come into us through political correctness, then we are part of the darkening of truth and justice in this world. Stand in the light and be a reflector of the light and a professor of the

light. Take the light into the darkness. If you do not, we are going to get darker and darker and darker. Remember that 1/3 of your light is already gone right now where we are today.

The church is involved in lawlessness. Many in the church will vote for lawlessness. They do not want restraint. They think that abortion is okay. Do you believe that abortion is okay? If you pastors do not believe that, then why are your people voting for it?

Homer: Romans 1:28⁴ says that God gave people like that over to a debased mind. Is that what we are talking about? Our people's minds are twisted and crazy?

Strong Deception

V: Romans is describing a process of degradation. That degradation is a place in which you have lost your orientation between right and wrong. Many people with good intentions are deceived and in that process. Some of these people are members of your churches and otherwise decent people.

Jerry: It says that even the elect will be deceived?

V: The elect will *almost* (if it were possible) be deceived.⁵ We are going to have a very hard time seeing through this darkness.

Spiritual Mark and Deception

Dedicate yourselves against receiving the invisible mark of agreeing with political correctness. Get in training by opposing political correctness *now!* The mark is already being received today. Not receiving the

invisible mark is your training ground for defeating the physical mark.

There is another thing that I think is going to be connected to the mark. As you heighten your sensitivity to look through the darkness and see the errors that are sweeping across the country, *i.e.* false revivals, psychologies, theologies, prophecies, teachings, philosophies, and politics, you will detect and repel your own self indulgence and upside down *kenosis*. Your piety will be more inclined to balance, and you will discern the mystery of iniquity far sooner than the masses.

The masses are not going to catch on. They are going to follow Antichrist, and they are going to take the invisible mark and eventually the physical mark. Ultimately, they are going to the lake of fire. But the lukewarm saints are also going along the way with them thinking they are on the correct path until . . . they hit the wall. Then they will wake up and finally refuse to take the physical mark if . . . they are truly saved.

The saints will use rationalizing to excuse their choices. I have already heard some. There are saints today that have said that they would take the government's mark if it meant that their social security or retirement would not be cut off. Their excuse was that without their benefits, they would starve to death.

So, friend, beware! This is a very subtle thing. All you have to do in order to justify taking the mark is just rationalize the evil away: "This is not Antichrist. This is the government." That kind of thought pattern is already taking the invisible mark, and it is getting you ready to take a governmental mark.

Wanda: Are the people who go all the way to the wall the remnant?

V: Yes, they will be the remnant before the rapture. After the rapture, however, the remnant will be those who get saved during the most intense tribulation. They will stay

⁴ Romans 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

⁵ Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if [it were] possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if [it were] possible, even the elect.

alive only by fleeing and living off the land until the judgment.

Basically, we (I hope that you are among the “we” who are true disciples) are the remnant now before the rule of Antichrist. Over against us are the lukewarm group of Christians who are escapist in their thinking and do not believe that any sufferings and government oppression can happen to them. Even when it is going on right now, some Christians think that God will not let them have a day without food or suffer any tribulation. They think that those Christians who are suffering somehow deserve it because of sin in their lives. They will continue to believe that the government is good and that they are the righteous Christians until they finally hit the wall. Only then will they come to their senses. What I want is for the discernment to occur right now. The earlier we can discern the enemy, the more people will be brought into the present remnant.

Revelation

13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number [is] Six hundred threescore [and] six.

I confess to you that I do not qualify as one having the necessary wisdom. I do not know what the number 666 signifies unless it connects with the triad of heaven, earth, and sea in correlation with the angel standing on the earth and the sea with his hand reaching up to heaven. So, I will go on to Revelation 14.

REVELATION 14

The Physical Mark

Revelation

14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty [and] four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

Notice that elsewhere the mark of Satan is written in the forehead, but here the mark of God is written in the forehead. It is mark against mark. Which mark am I taking right now? I am taking the mark of God in my forehead because I am trying to think on the thoughts of God. The thoughts of God are not self-glory, self-indulgence, self-satisfaction, self-centeredness, or political correctness.

The thoughts of God are the mind of Christ, i.e. the *kenosis*. He gave His only begotten Son, and I am to give myself. You are to give yourself. Sacrifice! Start thinking in terms of *kenosis*. Get the mark of God, the invisible mark of God on your forehead and in your thought life. Then find your spiritual gifts and go out and start ministering, and get the invisible mark of God on your right hand. Make your actions the same as God's actions. Make your thoughts be the same as God's thoughts. Jesus said in Philippians 2, “Let this mind be in you.”⁶ That is where we are: taking those invisible marks. I am sealed with the mark of God. There is a spiritual mark on me! And when Satan comes, he sees **PROPERTY OF ALMIGHTY GOD** in the middle of my forehead (person) and on my hand (works).

The only way Satan can mess with me is if I give him permission. When I give Satan permission, he can come in and do all manner of evil in my life, in my body, and in my home until I take that permission back and say, “Stop! Get out of here, because I am the property of God—bought, paid for, signed, sealed, and delivered to God.”

Many Waters

Revelation

14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, . . .

Notice that, there are a lot of different kinds of waters. There is some truth in a lot

⁶ Philippians 2:5.

of different denominations, people. When you hear God, it is going to sound like lots of waters, not just our own, which I believe has the greatest amount of the truth.

Revelation

14:2 . . . and as the voice of a great thunder: . . .

We have already talked about thunder.

Revelation

14:2 . . .and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

I want you to know that a harp brings a cooperation and a harmony together, so when you see the harping in here, it is talking about how God acts through His people in harmony. We all come together, and we can hear the voice of many waters, and act in harmony together, and bring the whole truth, not in chaos and not in the traditions of men, self interpretation, or private interpretation but in the harmony of God.

New Song by 144,000

Revelation

14:3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred [and] forty [and] four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

Now notice where the 144,000 are. They are in heaven right in front of the throne with the beasts and the elders. We have been seeing this scene coming up over and over and over again. Here are these 144,000 right there singing away. They have the big mark, the name of God written across their foreheads, and they are singing this new song. These people were redeemed from the earth. You have been redeemed from the earth, but there is a new song being sung by this 144,000 that you cannot sing.

It is a special kind of redemption that we are looking at here.

Revelation

14:4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, [being] the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

This kind of redemption is for a kind of man who has no ties at all to the earth. They are not worrying about how they are going to make their money and where they are going to do their job or where they are going to take their wives and where they are going to take their vacation and where they are going to build their houses. They are not worrying about a car with a dead battery in it and other kinds of problems that are going to come along. They are going to walk free from the earth. They are going to walk through the earth, and they are not going to have a wife that says, "I think we need to get a new car," or "We just do not make enough money. You need to get a second job." They are free of the things that tie you down and inhibit your free walk.

We have a song to sing too, and it is a new song, but it is not this song. When these people were redeemed from the earth the umbilical cord was whacked off. They fit Paul's description: "I would rather you not marry,"⁷ because if you marry, you will have to please a wife. She has concerns of the world. These guys do not have a wife or any of those earthly concerns. They have been redeemed from the earth. They have no defilement with them, so they are completely free.

Revelation

14:5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

This is sacrifice without regard to another care. It is total sacrifice. When these 144,000 get saved, they are going to get radically

⁷ 1 Corinthians 7:27-40.

saved. Their justification will be like ours, but their sanctification will not be like our rinky-dink lukewarm stuff. It will be like that of Jeremiah, Isaiah, and John the Baptist. Isaiah went around naked.⁸ Jeremiah was lowered down into a cesspool,⁹ and had to stand leaning against the wall and sleep standing up or he would have drowned in that stuff. He did not care. Bring it on. That John-the-Baptist attitude is also what He wants from us. It is called the *kenosis*. We are seeing the 144,000 do exactly what He wants. All we can do is approximate it because we are in the context of marriage, career, and earthly life concerns.

Present Life Context

How are you going to make the best profit for God? It looks to me that you have to do the best you can in the context where you are.

Paul says, "If you are a slave, stay a slave."¹⁰ I am not trying to get you to change out from where you are, stay where you are and maximize it. You are pulling two things together. You are in a context of being connected to the earth. You are not like the 144,000. These folks are totally disconnected from earthly concerns. But you also have a call on your life of sacrifice and *kenosis* in your context. So you must pull the two

together without destroying either one. You cannot destroy your marriage, and you cannot say no to God. So, what are you going to do? You must hang on to both of them and do your best in your context.

Maximize your call within your context. The thing that we must consider is that one competes against the other. It takes wisdom, then, to hold the context and call together to maximize them both. If you maximize one at the breaking of the other, you will have failed the faith.¹¹

Notice that there is no guile in the 144,000. Guile is an underlying agenda of deception in what you say or do. That is a false presentation designed to manipulate.

Revelation 14:6 begins with "And I." "And I" is a place where chronology can pick up again. I am not saying that it does at this point, only that it could.

Babylon is Fallen (Babylon, the World System)

Revelation

14:6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

14:7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

14:8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

God puts on the one side Babylon as the city of the world, which represents the earth's system that either allures into slavery via our voluntary allegiance (as in America) or enslaves us via bondage to the materialism of

⁸ Isaiah 20:2-3.

⁹ Jeremiah 38:6.

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches. Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called [being] a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use [it] rather. For he that is called in the Lord, [being] a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, [being] free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

¹¹ 1 Timothy 5:8.

Socialism, National Socialism, Communism, and religion, such as Sharia (God usually uses Egypt to exemplify bondage via force and Babylon to exemplify bondage via allurements). Over against Babylon is Jerusalem, the Lord's system that is dedicated to God Who is seeking and saving those who are lost. Those two systems are put forward as the dichotomy of the entire universe.

When the world system is brought into the church, Mystery Babylon gets written on the harlot's brow. The fall of Babylon and the judgment of Babylon are going to occur. We are getting closer and closer to it, and now this passage declares it.

Verse 14:7 predicts the judgment of the world. Not only are there the person and works judgments of the saints but also of the entire world. So the announcement that Babylon is fallen means that the world system has climaxed, the time of the Gentiles walking all over God's people is coming to the end, and now God is about to step onto the scene and bring judgment against them. The world system falls and receives the wrath of God. The world system will drink the wine of the wrath of fornication.

Worshipping the Beast

Revelation

14:9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive [his] mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

14:10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

14:11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Let me stop there for a minute. Worshipping the beast is not going to appear like worship. Worshipping the beast is being done now. It is a mentality of political correctness, i.e. assuming the rightness in the governmental approach to things when the government is a fallen institution. This worship is going to have devastating effects. So if the beast is setting the laws for the world community, and the people say, "Oh, he is so good to us to give us the great laws to get rid of these mean-spirited Christians who have hindered us. Now we can get rid of these laws that have been stopping us from having our complete fulfillment." That is worship. It is not necessarily going to have the kind of definition where you get down on your knees and pray to the beast. It is going to be this kind of mental acceptance. It is going to be to affirm what the beast is saying and then ratifying it by taking the mark.

Mary: Daniel 7:25 verifies exactly what you are saying. It says here that He is going to wear out the saints of the most High because it has to do with the changing times and laws.¹² You mentioned laws.

Jack: Law and lawless being in the masculine, then all of a sudden there is a her. Is that significant? It is calling Babylon her.¹³

V: The "she" would be the bride of Antichrist, his church (the feminine *ecclesia*).

Revelation

14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Your patience is to get under God's burden, keep His commandments, grit your teeth, get tough and stay under it. It is a commandment to you to endure to the end.

¹² Daniel 7:25 And he shall speak [great] words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

¹³ Revelation 14:8.

Chapter Questions

1. The rapture will occur (choose one)
 - a. after the last Seal is opened
 - b. prior to the last Seal
 - c. at Trumpet #5
 - d. at Trumpet #7
2. The person in charge of education and journalism will be (choose one)
 - a. the false prophet
 - b. the Antichrist
 - c. Satan
 - d. not yet known
3. What is the idea within escapism?
4. Who is the Beast of the Earth?
5. Explain the spiritual mark of the Beast.
6. Describe the 144,000.

Chapter 10

THE FIRST SIX VIALS

REVELATION 14

Talking Image

We had gotten down to verse 12 in Revelation 14, but there is something in 13:15 that I forgot to mention, and that is the talking image. The talking image is a television. John described what he saw, which was something he had never seen before. It is not some kind of statue that is made to talk. It is not anything like that. This is a method of communication for the false prophet. You remember the two horns had to do with journalism and education. In the field of journalism would be television in which the image moves and talks. It is a talking image. We have it in place today, and if you want to see a talking image, just turn on the TV.

Taking the Spiritual Mark

Last week we talked about taking the mark spiritually. As you turn on the television today, your family is being invaded with political correctness, and if they accept that political correctness, that is taking the mark on the forehead, the spiritual mark. If they put that political correctness into effect, it is taking the spiritual mark on the hand. There is going to come a time, however, when a physical mark is going to be required to prove political correctness. Those who have been politically aligned with this talking image being used by the false prophet will come to a point where they have to make a decision: Do I take the physical mark? If they are saved, they are going to come to their senses at that point, and they are going to say, "Oh, no, my God, how could I have let you down?" because they have taken the spiritual mark in their thinking and in their behavior. They have followed the crowd, the popular crowd all the way to the point of hitting the wall of

making that final decision of whether to take a physical mark.

At that point, when it comes to the physical mark, even our stupid Christians are going to wake up. If they are not saved and Christian in name only, the propensity for the spiritual mark is going to lead right into readily consenting to taking the physical mark.

Political Correctness

This business of taking the spiritual mark is happening today. Even if you do not watch that talking image, political correctness is coming at you in a variety of ways, and it is highly persuasive. It is coming at you in economics. It is promoting an economical position. For example, the politically correct church will hold to its tax exemption at the cost of not being able to express the truth in politics. The church cannot support a political candidate, warn against one, or even provide voting report cards for fear of losing its tax exemption. Thus its witness is darkening further (trumpet #4).

Political correctness is coming at you in relationships. If you are going to be spiritually exclusive to the point of following Jesus alone, then your community or society will not accept you. You cannot preach against the abominations because the majority of society will already be involved in them. Homosexuality, divorce, gay marriage, pedophilia, pornography, witchcraft, drugs, etc., are gaining the ascendancy today and will be totally accepted as normal.

Political correctness is coming at you in criticisms of your religious overtones. You will be criticized as an exclusionist or a reactionist. Your theology may not be broad

enough to admit the other religions or even the liberals of your own religion.

There are many ways that political correctness is coming at us right now. The false prophet is getting that message out there. It is bombarding the people. It is coming in subtle ways too. Even entertainment shows a position being put out there that is introducing homosexuality as just an alternative life style. In the classroom we are getting bombarded with homosexuality, Communism, hedonism, sexual freedom, abortion, narcissism, secularism, and political correctness. So even in that realm, Satan is propagating political correctness.

Art forms are taking the same tact. We are giving our tax money to the National Endowment for the Arts. Look at that terrible stuff. It is evil, but you are being encouraged to get on board and get politically correct. We have a majority of the people against these art forms, but yet they are still there. Most of our government is antichrist because the mark on their hands and heads are politically correct; hey, they even establish what is politically correct. They give one message out of their mouth when running for office, and think and do something entirely different when elected.

Homer: I have a question. Back in chapter 12 when the serpent cast the flood of water out of his mouth at the woman, is that the church going against Israel?

V: No, that is religion going against Israel, and I particularly think it is Islam.

Joe: This worship of the beast, I think I follow you, is people just going along with all this political correctness.

V: Yes, it is an attitude, and that is the spiritual mark. Now you can watch television, and just because you are not bowing down to it does not mean you are not worshipping the beast. All you have to do is agree with it. To take the spiritual mark on

your forehead is to agree with a politically correct system.

Pete: If you just keep on watching it even though you know it is wrong, is that agreeing with it?

V: No, but it may be opening your mind to something, and the Lord says to flee temptation.

This business about the spiritual mark is some serious stuff, people, and I want to encourage you to stand against the tide because you are going to be all alone. If you are looking for comfort in numbers, it is over with for you. Do not look for that. If you can find just one to stand with you, you are very fortunate. So hang tough and stay strong to the Word. Resist going with the crowd because the crowd is stampeding over a cliff.

Our knowing where to take our stands is a matter of wisdom. A lot of it is trial and error, and I suspect that you have not stood on the right side of some issues. But every one of us will take a beating on the way we stand if we are going to stand *true*.

We left off last week in verse 12. Here is the patience of the saints.

Patience of the Saints

Revelation

14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Patience is standing under the burden, and denying your flesh (see Chart 10.1). Your flesh is not going to want to stand under the burden. It is going to want to throw the burden down and flee and indulge itself, but this is where the saints stand. They stand with keeping the commandments of God and the faith

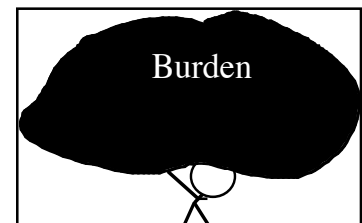


Chart 10.1

of Jesus. Under the burden of *kenotic* sacrifice is patience.

The lure is about taking the mark and worshipping the beast, joining up with Babylon, the world system, which is the opposite of the *kenosis*. Climbing and indulging yourself opposes the patience of the saints. Standing against those things in political correctness and staying under the burden of the *kenosis* by not shying away from sacrifice, suffering, and pain, is the patience which saints of today must endure.

Patience is not this thing we call patience today. Patience has changed. The patience that we think of is that we cannot lose our temper. The patience that God is talking about is *hupo-meno* which is to abide under. To abide means that is your life, Brothers. That is where you live. You live your life under the burden (24/7 kind of living).

The spiritual mark is now being promoted. The spiritual mark is soon going to progress to a physical mark. Acceptance by the politically correct folks in power, economic success, and self-indulgence are going to be the enticements to worshipping the beast for you to resist. If you stand under the burden with patience, then you are rejecting all of that political correctness. If you accept the political correctness for more ease to your life, then you are getting out from under the Lord's burden. Then you will be free to have a good time in life just like all the other people, and just run right through life with the crowd and have it made.

Tim: I found out how the masses are doing this—people do not know the Word of God. The whole fight is against the Word. We do not have to wonder about what is right to do. The Word of God has told us. It is right there in the Word for everybody that reads the Bible. But what the politically correct "Christians" do, is look at the Word and say, "Well, It does not mean that." So, like you said, your burden is the standing

there by yourself because they want to take the doctrine and twist it or make it appear like it means something else. So the key to the church is that you have to get in there and study that Word and know what Jesus meant.

V. and the Class: Amen!

The Martyrs under Antichrist

Revelation

14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed [are] the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

This is a statement about those people who are getting saved after the rapture. God says these are special people. I mean, they are going to pay with their lives, and God is saying, "Blessed are every one of these that get saved and die after this point in time." This point in time is past the last trump. This verse describes people getting saved after the rapture and after the beast is on the throne and after there has been an implementation of a policy of killing all Christians. Those not taking the mark must die. These people are going to get saved, stand up, and say, "I did not take the mark, and I am not going to take the mark." They will get their heads whacked off. This, God says, is a blessed person. He says, "Write this down."

Notice what their decision point is going to be. They know that they are going to die if they accept the Lord, but they will accept Him anyway. They look death right in the face and accept the Lord. So God said, "Write it down, blessed are these."

Jack: What are their works?

V: They are going to give testimony at the cost of their lives. They will say, "I have faith in Jesus Christ, and I will not recant that faith even if you kill me. Jesus is my Lord; Him I worship, not Antichrist." Man that is big-league works right there. Their sacrifice

is going to have the same effect as the blood of the martyrs had in the Middle Ages. That blood became the seed for revival. As others observe these new martyrs, the seeds will be sown into their hearts.

The Harvest of the Earth

Revelation

14:14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud [one] sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

14:16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

14:17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

14:18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast [it] into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

14:20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand [and] six hundred furlongs.

Two Kinds of Reapings

The two kinds of reapings refer back, for me, to the Law of the Harvest. There are two kinds of reapings that correlate to two kinds of sowings.

The Law of the Harvest

Galatians

6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Reaping of Christians

The first kind of reaping is by the Son of man (14:14). The Lord is going to reap that group of people who are being martyred as described in verse 13. Those Christians who die after the rapture are the Lord's reaping out of the earth. He is swinging that sickle into the earth, and here come more saints into the Kingdom. As they enter, we are going to be shouting and glorifying the Lord and congratulating them for their steadfast faith in their martyr's entrance into the Kingdom.

But there is another reaping, and that is the reaping that is to the flesh. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."¹

Reaping Unbelievers to God's Wrath

Revelation

14:17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, . . .

The first reaping was by the Lord. He took His sickle and reaped into the Kingdom, and then here comes an angel with a sickle, and he is going to be reaping the harvest to the flesh. Those being reaped are described as a vine of grapes that are fully ripe. This angel, then, thrusts in the sickle and gathers the grapes of wrath, and they are being brought into a winepress. These grapes are

¹ Galatians 6:8.

going to be trodden down outside the city. The blood will run 200 miles and as high as a horse's bridle.

These two reapings compose a parenthetical description of life on earth after the rapture. The earth's population will be undergoing the intense tribulation. The tribulation and martyrdom of the saints will be tribulation from Antichrist. The intense tribulation of the rest of the population, who are wearing the mark of Antichrist, will be tribulation from God.

After the rapture, there are going to be two kinds of people, those who do not receive the mark and those who receive the mark. Those who do receive the mark are going to have God's wrath poured out on them, and that is the kind of wrath that is being described here. This description of grapes in a winepress is another signification. The people are going to be pressed and squeezed from every direction. Every part of their lives is going to be hell on earth. They will be without hope for any relief.

These visions are being given to John as signs. So, he writes what he sees. When he sees a television, he writes, "An image." He saw an image, and it was a talking image. That is all he could see. The way he is writing, you see, is based on the visionary signs that are given him. He was describing what he saw. It was an image, and life was given to the image so it could talk. He saw the image. Then he writes down, "I saw an image, and life was given to it so it could speak."²

When John sees the grapes being harvested, you know what he saw? Grapes. And the grapes were put in a vat, and they were trodden down, and it was the wrath of God that was trodding them down. Then he saw blood coming out of the grapes that was 200 miles long and six feet deep.

² Revelation 13:15.

Double Entendre

John saw a river of blood, but what does it mean? Now if you take the signs literally, and are looking for the exact signs, the only way that is going to work is that there is a double entendre. If there is not a double entendre, then you are looking for something that is not going to be there. Double entendre means both literal and sign interpretations are valid. But you have to come back to how this whole book is set up.

What God said in the beginning of the book is that it is a book of signs, and God through Jesus to an angel signed it to John. It was not dictated as a book of words. It is a book of signs to John that he, in turn, described with words. If the signs have a double entendre, and sometimes I find myself saying, "Yes, it is a double entendre," and then I will read a little, then I run to the opposite and say, "No, it is only a sign."

Taking it literally I could have said, "Man, there is blood 200 miles long and 6 feet deep. That means they are going to grab these people and put them in the press and stomp the blood right out of them." That is a kind of literal thinking. Then I think, "If I am looking for the blood, if I am looking for these little things as if they were words that came to John, then I could be deceived, and I will miss the signs."

At one time I was at double entendre. Today I am over here at signs, but tomorrow I may be back to double entendre. I want you to be thinking now because I do not have a lock on the truth. None of us have that. We are all searchers together. I need for you to be thinking as well. I do not mind telling you what I think for that is my job. That is what I do. Most of you tell me what you think. (Laughter)

Wanda: What is an entendre?

V: It is an intentional meaning. If you have a double entendre in a book of signs,

you could have that sign as one of the meanings and the literalness of it as the other meaning. So an earthquake as a sign to me is a disruption of the social structures, but as a double entendre it would be a crack in the earth as well—both meanings at the same time.

Betty: If I understand correctly, when John received the sign, for example the television, the image, then he is going to explain that in words he understands. Is that correct?

V: That is correct. Most of the Bible is words from God. You see what I am saying? This particular book, however, is signs from God. Words are signs too, but they have very specific meanings. A visionary, picture-sign is a much more generic kind of thing, much bigger. The words in this book do not express the *meaning* of the sign. Instead, the words *describe the appearance* of the sign. John's descriptions are under the guidance of the Spirit. So, the Holy Spirit is using John's vocabulary to bring out the words that are consistently true all the way through. You are not going to see this zigzag stuff where the sign changes meanings in this book because that would lead to chaos. The signs are consistent in meaning.

Paul: God has always used visions for His prophets. He did it with Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

V: Absolutely. These visions are about things that are coming. The words describe the visions. John is looking at this scene, like a drama, and it unfolds in front of him. He is seeing all this weird stuff, and he describes it. It is still weird. Then we look at it and forget that it is descriptive of signs. Then we think that there are two fire-breathing witnesses blowing fire out of their mouths. Some people talk about monsters and flying saucers because they have gone to the literal method of interpretations. They have started interpreting the book as if it were a wordbook rather than a sign book.

The grapes in the winepress describe the population as having their lives sucked out of them by the oppressive society that is lacking in justice and light. It would be the whole unsaved population of the earth that is suffering from the tribulation from God that results from the unrestrained outworking's from the terrible rules of Antichrist.

The people getting saved during this time are being killed by Antichrist, but these people are not the ones described as the grapes of wrath. All the Christian martyrs will constitute a big harvest of tremendous Christians who are willing to die for their faith. They are going to be our superiors.

Who Gives the Orders, and Who Does the Work?

Before we leave this chapter, let me tell you this exciting part. I want you to see how much God's servants are doing. I want you to see that every activity in heaven, not one is excluded, is done by God's servants. God doles out responsibility to angels, to the four elders, and to all of the saints. Work and responsibility are delegated. Now that is not something new. I want you to hear this now. This is not a new thought. This is not a change of activity that is suddenly taking place at that point over here in the future. This is God's operating style right now. You are God's hands, His feet, His mouth, everything. When God does something in this planet, guess who does it? You! He does it through you!

Now when you start reversing that, you get up in the morning, you say, "Oh, Lord, I have Your work orders all lined out for You today. Here is what I need for You to do. I need" And you give Him His working orders, and you go about living your life. Where is your responsibility? Is it your responsibility to give Him His working orders so that you sit in the temple, and then you send God out to do the work? We have the

Christian life backwards, and it is normal for our flesh to be backwards. The world's brainwashing has already ruined us! We must turn our perception around and see that God gives the orders, and we do the work. And our churches need to be told this, and we must get this thing turned around.

If we are waiting for God to do His part in our daily life, we are living in vain. He has already done His part. He is the one that gives out the orders. By all means take your requests to God, but you must receive your orders from Him also in regard to those requests.

The prayers of the saints come up as the incense, the sweet smell in His nostrils, and the angels even play a part in that (Rev. 8:3ff). They bring the incense in, and they open it up, and the incense rises and God says, "Okay, I agree." It is time for the harvest to take place." I wanted to bring that out before we left the Law of the Harvest because it is very good.

REVELATION 15

Revelation

15:1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

15:2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, [and] over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous [are] thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true [are] thy ways, thou King of saints.

15:4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for [thou] only [art] holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

Sea of Glass

The sea of glass is the perfected church. That church is the glorified church that is made up of those who have died or been raptured. This church is crystal clear, and in it there are no waves. What you see is what you get. It is mingled with fire, i.e. the Word of God. Fire (*puros*), the purity, permeates the sea, and it contains no filthy ingredients.

Standing on top of the sea are those who were martyred. They stand on top after death. In order to have your life, you must lose it. In order to be a leader after death, you must be a servant before death. A servant is the person who serves, who sacrifices, who follows the *kenosis*. The one who goes down in humility and self-denial is the person who is going to be elevated in the end. Prior to death, elevation is temporal. After death, temporal elevation turns into descent, not to hell, but to descent in terms of where you are in the sea.

These people gave it all and glorified Christ with their faithful stance unto martyrdom. They stand on top of the sea. They are going to be our bosses. You see the people who get the furthest down in the *kenosis* are going to be elevated the highest up. Jesus Christ went all the way to the cross. He is Lord; He is at the very top. But there are going to be some folks right under Him. And there are going to be some under them, and some under them, and some under them. Way down near the bottom there is going to be Tim. (Laughter.)

Tim: Dr. V. will be close by, too. (Much laughter.)

Paul: Is there a significance in the word seven in the last plagues?

V: Yes, the plagues are going to be universal.

Paul: You know in the Bible, a lot of times when they really want to emphasize something, they say, "Holy, Holy, Holy"?

Say something three times. I was thinking this today; you know the number of the man is six, six, six. Maybe it is saying man, man, man.

V: Paul, that is good thinking.

Victory through Death

We have a victory described here. Those who have gotten the victory over the beast and his image and his mark and the numbers of his name have victory, but it cost them their lives. You see victory for Christians is through death. God wants you to have victory, but the only way you can have victory is through death, i.e. ***self-denial, dying to self***.

Now at this point in time under Antichrist, it is going to be an actual physical death, but right now for you to have victory, it must be through death as well. You have to declare a death sentence on your desires, on your plans, and on your expectations because the first step of discipleship is self-denial. You must be able to say no to yourself. If you want to have victory, and you want to have it right now, there is only one way, and it is the same way as these martyrs right here under Antichrist, and that is death to self. It may not be a physical death for you, but it will include the privations that you may encounter for your body in doing the things God is doing.

Hear what I am saying! We have had many of our forefathers, who had a very short spurt of glory, glorifying God in their lives, but it was like a shooting star, and it burned out. I am not saying to you that that is bad. I want you to hear this. God may call you to be a shooting star. But you need to be wise in how you invest your life. Please do not burn out on unprofitable busy work. Make your life count because that is the only shot at life you get. Bring in a profit because you are going to be judged on your works. Your works will follow you the same way the works of these martyrs followed them. Let's make sure our lives count.

Before we leave this I want you to see the Song of Moses and the Song of the Servant of God and the Song of the Lamb unite the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints with the Lord here. These saints who are singing these songs have to do with both Testaments. I also want you to see that these martyrs who are standing on the glass have the harps of God, and the harpers are the ones who lead in the harmonizing of the saints. It would be wonderful, to be in that first layer under the Lord. It would be wonderful to be in that next layer under the Lord. It would be wonderful just to have a harp, to be able to lead in the harmonizing of the saints. All of that is up there for you to pursue, and God gives you a commandment to pursue it. He says, "Lay up treasure in heaven,"³ a commandment. We need to do just that.

One more thing, when they bless God in verse 3 they say, "Thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways."⁴ Just and true. You remember how we talked about the light, the sun and the moon being darkened by 1/3? That is truth and justice that is darkening, and in heaven the song praises Jesus as just and true. The light is going to be brilliantly clear there. There is not going to be any darkening because instead of us being the source of light via reflection, Jesus will need no reflectors. We are going to be standing in the presence of that perfect light. There will not be any darkening of that perfect light because it will not depend on reflectors. This present darkening (from the drought of truth and justice) is because of our dimming reflections.

³ Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

⁴ Revelation 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous [are] thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true [are] thy ways, thou King of saints.

Announcing the Seven Plagues

Revelation

15:5 And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

15:6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

15:7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

15:8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

Now here again is a delegated responsibility for the angels are going to dispense the wrath of God. God's use of His servants is consistent throughout Scripture, and He is looking to do that with us today.

REVELATION 16

Revelation

16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

That voice came from God delegating work to the angels having the bowls. They have the Word now, and they are going to do the work in obedience to the Word.

Vial 1: Grievous Sores

Revelation

16:2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and [upon] them which worshipped his image.

Now here is the first vial, and it is going to land on everyone that has the mark of the beast on them. Those people are worshipping the beast. This is a grievous sore. I suspect that what John saw was a visible sore. I think

that means a disease, and I think that disease is going to be a disease that is specifically pertaining to political correctness.

What comes to my mind today is AIDS because homosexuals have that. I do not know if that is the only one, if there are all kinds of politically correct diseases, but they are manifested to John as sores because he is seeing something with his eyes.

In the Old Testament the plagues that were done on Egypt were visible, and they are preparing us for another look at the end of the New Testament. That new look is even a newer look because the old words are being used to describe these visions, but the meaning is left for you and me to discern. Even John had to discern the meaning because he was not given words in the ear to write. He was given signs to describe.

Henry: Do you have any idea why John was using the words noisome and grievous referring to the sore?

V: Noisome means that it is an evil disease. It is an old, Sixteenth Century English word that is an interpretation of a Greek word that means evil and troubling.

Vial 2: Death of Souls in the Sea

Revelation

16:3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead [man]: and every living soul died in the sea.

The penalty on the apostate church is that it is going to become putrid, a putrefied blood—nothing alive in it. Not a living soul in it. Every person in that worldwide institutional church will be spiritually dead. This is the church that is going to come up under the Antichrist, and it is going to be a politically correct church. Instead of salvation by Jesus, a multitude of ways into salvation will be accepted in an ecumenical kind of approach.

By this time the only saved people will be those who are not acceptable in that church. They are going to be homeless people in the streets running for their lives and seeking food and shelter because they do not have a mark in order to buy and sell. They are being turned in to the authorities by their neighbors and by their relatives, and they are just going to be perceived as the scum of the earth just like it describes the heroes of faith in the book of Hebrews where it says, "They lived in holes in the earth, despised by all men," and furthermore it says that the "world was not worthy of them."⁵ We are going to be returning to that ancient scenario for all the true saints.

Those so-called "Christians" in the institutional church are not going to be suffering like the true saints. That is happening today. I know of saints not accepted by churches, I mean, good saints, like the president of one of our conservative seminaries. It is going to come to the point where to confess Jesus Christ openly and to follow Him will mark you as a person unfit for the church. When that vial of God's wrath comes out, that church is going to be turned into a dead and putrefied institution that will result from a total exodus of all true saints. It is going to become an institutional church of Antichrist.

Vial 3: Rivers and Fountains Became Blood

Revelation

16:4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

These are the paid vocational preachers and ministers in the putrefied church. They, too, become blood. It was their ministries

that became the source of putrifaction of all the members.

Vials two and three have to do with religion. Number one is on the politically correct population. Vial number two is on the church, and vial number three is on the clergy. Next, comes a commentary from the angels about the clergy.

Indictment of the Clergy

Revelation

16:5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

16:6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

The vocational clergy have earned it. They have participated in the physical killings of the true clergy, and they participate in the spiritual killings of their church members. They have blood on their hands and blood to drink.

Revelation

16:7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous [are] thy judgments.

You need to take Church History to see about this shedding of blood of the saints and the prophets because our history is filled up with this evil. It will break your heart. If you have not had Church History, do not be afraid to take my Church History. I guarantee that you will pat your foot in my class. You will jump up and down. The excitement is like this that you are experiencing right here. Both our history and our future is something to get excited about because our forefathers have paid the price.

Sybil: This would be through the ministers that are on earth that are leading the one-world religion that have persecuted those that were left after the rapture, and said, "They are

⁵ Hebrews 11:37-38 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and [in] mountains, and [in] dens and caves of the earth.

teaching theology that is not politically correct. Send them to Antichrist.”

V: Right, and so there is going to be this great shedding of blood and the turning in of the people by their neighbors, by their relatives, and by everybody that knows them. They are going to get their heads whacked off, and we are going to see them standing on top of the crystal sea in heaven with their harps.

These others in the institutional church though are in their nice, wonderful robes. They receive a good fat payroll, they have a great pension working, they are not going to say anything against the accepted doctrine of the beast, and everybody is going to “amen” their sermons. The only way you can tell the difference between that person in that church and that person out there in the world is by their robes. Their behavior is going to be identical. They are going to march to the same drummer. They are going to have the same thoughts and the same deeds. Even today, there is a lot of difficulty in distinguishing between a Christian and a non-Christian.⁶

Vial 4: Scorching Fire from the Sun

Revelation

16:8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

16:9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

All right, you remember how we talked about the sun and the moon darkening, and how it only darkened 1/3, but the sixth seal rendered a total blackness? Truth and justice are going to be totally taken out of this world.

We are not talking about where you cannot see to walk around. It is not that kind of darkness. We are still going to have sunlight. The sun will be beaming down and the moon is going to be shining at night, but there is going to be such a darkness in the minds that truth is going to be a lie, and a lie is going to be truth. Good is going to be bad, and bad is going to be good. Justice is going to be injustice, and injustice is going to be justice. And as the ongoing darkening of today proceeds, then this angel, in his wrath, is going to pour out his vial on the sun and the light is going to increase.

Now here is what the light is. It is not that the sun is going to just start scalding you, and you are going to start blistering all over. That is not what we are talking about here, unless of course there is a double entendre. We are talking about the realization of the real truth and justice coming into the minds of the people who have decided to walk in darkness and join in the darkness. It is now penalty time. Here is one with AIDS who is going to say: “I joined in with the crowd, and it was considered the good and noble thing to do, and now I am dying. Why?” It is going to dawn on them that if they had not joined in, they would not be where they are. “If I just had not done that. Why did I do that? But what I did has to be right because the beast declared it so. I cannot repent of that.”

You see, they are going to continue in their blasphemy, but they are going to be scorched with truth and justice because truth and justice is the Law of the Harvest. When you sow to the flesh, you reap corruption.⁷ When you say, “I can sow to the flesh, and I am not going to reap corruption because the beast says I am going to have the happy life,” you are going to arrive at a destructive end. The person wearing the mark of the beast will

⁶ A book that I recommend for all is *The Woman Who Rides the Beast* by Dave Hunt. When you read this book, you will wonder how Dave Hunt stays alive.

⁷ Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

think: “I sow my seeds to the flesh, and now the corruption comes in, and now I am being corrupted. The beast said that I would not be corrupted, but I am being corrupted. What is going on here?” They are going to be caught in the dilemma of seeing the truth, the scorching, brilliant justice while continuing to hold to their abominable confession and allegiance to the Antichrist. But the realization of justice and retribution is becoming crystal clear. They are caught in that coming together of those two immovable forces. The only way you can get out of this dilemma is to repent. Give up on the abominable, and go into the light, and that is why you are called children of the light. But it will be too late for these people because of the seal of Antichrist that is upon their minds.

Jill: I was just thinking at the beginning of this lesson about this statement that they repented not.⁸ Could it be that at this particular time God has withdrawn from them the ability to repent?

V: Anyone who takes the mark of the beast will be unable to exchange that seal for God’s seal.

Jill: After the scorching?

V: I have experienced people that are like that. When the scorching truth of reality comes down on them, they turn away from it. They are caught in the dilemma between two immovable things. One is their allegiance to the lie, and the other one is the undeniable truth that they are reaping corruption.

Joe: God says that they are going to be sent a powerful delusion⁹ that they believe a lie.

V: Right, the delusion is here now. The people love darkness. I can see the

preferences of the population to accept lies today.

Vial 5: Darkness

Revelation

16:10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

So in the midst of daylight, there is absolutely total darkness in the whole realm because anybody who follows the beast is in total darkness of the mind. We will have reached the end at this point of that seal dealing with darkness where it is now totally dark, but yet the scorching, brilliant light of truth is scorching the people. Then it says they gnawed their tongues for pain because they are caught in the dilemma . . .

Revelation

16:11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

Here they are caught in the jaws of a dilemma, and they cannot get out because they want to hold both sides together. So, they blame God, blaspheme Him, and maintain their current paths of lies and destruction.

Henry: That is the worldly sorrow that leads to death is it not?¹⁰

V: Yes, the worldly sorrow that leads to death is a sorrow for suffering the consequences but without a true repentance. Their behavior is not going to change. Thus their persistence in the destructive behavior will result in death. The realization of this effect is described as the scorching sun.

The blame game is to blame God! This will always result in destruction.

Vial 6: Drying up the Euphrates

⁸ Revelation 16:9.

⁹ 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

¹⁰ 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

Revelation

16:12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

You know what the Euphrates is? It is a river. You know what river means? Clergy. You know what the clergy of the east is? the imams of Islam. And so, the clergy's preaching of Islam is going to dry up enough to allow Islam to join all the other religions to come against the people of God, both Jews and Christians. They are even going to join with the apostate church of Christ, the church of Antichrist, the harlot, to rid the world of all vestiges of God.¹¹

Now we come to a parenthetical, and after it we will stop and pick up in the next lesson.

Unclean Spirits Like Frogs

Revelation

16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs [come] out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

16:14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, [which] go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he . . .

That is you and me, I hope!

Revelation

16:15 . . . that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16:16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Let me talk to you about the frogs. Frogs are amphibians. Amphibians are at home on earth and in water. Frogs are the demonic influences with the same message in society and in the church. They have only one message, but I do not know what that message is. I cannot discern that from here. The message is equally relevant for the earth as it is for the sea. It is going to unite them both tightly together in a common cause.

There are a lot of amphibians today because we are bringing the world's methods into our churches—bring it on. Does it make money? Bring it in to our church!

Let me just warn you one more time! Watch! keep your clothes. Some of you have worked hard and denied yourselves. You have some clothes. Work and be diligent to keep your clothes because, folks, you can end up naked. I do not care how well you have done, you can still end up naked. Watch! Be careful! Keep your clothes.

Mary: When Jesus talks about the signs at the end of the age, he declares that the times of distress will be unequalled. He said that if God had not cut the times short, not even the elect would survive. Is this it?

V: This is it; yes, ma'am, this is it.

¹¹ If you want to know how, read *A Woman Who Rides the beast*. Mary is the uniting factor between Islam and Christianity.

Chapter Questions

1. What is the spiritual mark?
2. Describe the patience of the saints.
3. Who is reaped by the angel's sickle?
4. What is the sea of glass?
5. Describe the first six vials.

Chapter 11

THE HARLOT, BEAST, AND FALL OF BABYLON

REVELATION 16

Vial 7: Great Earthquake

Revelation

16:17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

16:18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, [and] so great.

16:19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

16:20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

16:21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, [every stone] about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

This vial goes into the air where the prince and power of the air resides. Therefore, this vial is right at the dominion of Satan.

All the rest of this passage is very difficult, and I do not know what the hail means. Hail symbolizes something, but I do not know what it is. There may be a double entendre there as well. It would be easy to just say 100-pound hunks of ice falling out of the sky, but it is symbolic of something at the very least. I leave that to you to wrestle with.

The Great City

But let us look at verse 19, the great city. When we are dealing with cities, we are

dealing with systems, and we have nations and cities. Cities are systems the way I am interpreting these, and the great city would be the world system. The world system is exemplified by Babylon, which will be addressed in Revelation 17. Here, though, is an introduction of the great system, and it is divided into three parts: economics, religion, and government. Would that not fit with six, six, six (666) if you put six with each one of the three parts?

Henry: You are talking about dividing it into three. There is a meeting, November 16 in South Africa regarding setting up government, monetary, and religious systems for the world.

Oscar: I was going to share something about the hailstones. I heard at one point that when they were doing nuclear bomb testing, that the dirt and debris was blown so far into the atmosphere that part of the aftermath was 50-pound hailstones. The debris blew so far into the atmosphere that ice kept gathering and gathering.

V: Oh, but you see that is the literal interpretation, and that is the easy part. However, when dealing with signs, what do hailstones mean? It has to be symbolic of something, but I do not know what it is. As far as hail being frozen water, it could mean a hardened kind of religious credo that is very hurtful when it rains down on us.

As far as the chunks of ice, that is what hail is. That thought is the literal understanding, and where hail comes from is from updrafts. A nuclear explosion could create the updraft. But there are just plain updrafts that do that. I do not know what the hail represents. It is something coming from

heaven. What is that something if it is not a hard religious credo, as frozen water, which is hammering down on the population, I do not know. It could be that the blaspheming could be by blaming God for the suffering from Antichrist's religion (hail as frozen water). Again, this sign could have the double entendre. I just do not know.

I see the islands as being denominations, and of course we have talked about mountains before being institutions. The banking institution is going to collapse, and other institutions as well; even the institution of marriage is going to collapse. When I say collapse that may not be collapse out of existence, but collapse into a perversion like a one-world religion and a one-world economy. What we know as independent and individual kinds of denominations and institutions are going to cease to exist in this vial.

The great city is divided into three parts, and I think there is some connection with the six, six, six there. That is just a gut feeling. You feel absolutely free to reject it.

This is the last vial, and as soon as it is poured out into the air, the voice from heaven says, "It is done."¹ It is over with. All of God's wrath is initiated, and now we are going to see the completion of those things working their way out. You remember that it was linear, each seal started and continued onward toward the Day of the Lord. Each trumpet had a starting point and the results continued onward toward the same Day of the Lord. The vials come out one by one, and they, too, will climax at the same time as the seals and the trumpets—at the Day of the Lord. Everything is progressive.

When the vial is poured out, when the trumpet sounds, when the seal is opened, it starts the process. You cannot see the whole thing at the starting point. All you know is that it got started, and it is growing and

growing, and here we are in the midst of all of that. We are able to observe then where that particular thing is in its status, but we cannot see except by God's Word what it is going to look like when it gets all the way out to the end point. We know, though, that that is where it is going. That trumpet, which indicates a darkening, has already blown, and we are at least one-third dim right now. The church will not speak out against Antichrist in fear of losing its tax exemption (the right to buy and sell). The church's witness has been dimmed by one-third—the third dealing with the government.

Ted: You mentioned six, six, six in regard to the system. Since the young minister up front earlier mentioned six, six, six being man, man, man, we have man-controlled economics, man-centered Gospel, and man for our government.

V: Yes, that fits!

REVELATION 17

Paul, would you tell the class what you did today?

Paul: I called the radio show on 91.7 and told them that Christians do not know how to vote. It is amazing that the people who follow Satan all know how to vote. That is how all these people in office got in office. I told them that one of our teachers gave us a great way to figure out how to tell our church members to vote. If you cannot figure out whom to vote for, all you have to do is ask somebody that you know is an abortionist or follows the political correctness philosophy who they are going to vote for, and then vote for the other guy.

V: That at least gets the least of two evils.

The Great Whore

Revelation

17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and

¹ Revelation 16:18.

talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

17:2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Let's look at Jeremiah 2 and 3. Beginning in Jeremiah 2:20 is a statement about how God's people are being called the harlot.

Jeremiah

2:20 For of old time I have broken thy yoke, [and] burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot.

Jeremiah is talking about His own people, God's people who have pledged themselves to God but are transgressing their pledge and using their freedom for self-indulgence (idolatry).

Jeremiah

3:1 . . . but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

3:2 . . . thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

3:6 . . . and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

3:8 . . . Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

3:9 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

Here it is over and over again, you see, talking about God's people being the harlot. Then we come back to Revelation, who is the harlot? It is God's people! This harlot is committing fornication, it says, with the kings. But look what it says about the other people: ". . . and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Revelation 17:2). There must be, then, some kind of collusion, the desire of the kings and the desires of the harlot are

similar in nature, and that is this concept of climbing. The harlot climbs by giving herself to the kings. Remember that climbing is the opposite of the *kenosis*. Then the population forsakes their eternities because they lose sight of eternity via the church's example. They become drunk on the wine.

Sybil: Are you saying the great whore is God's people or the secular world?

V: The whore is God's people. The secular world is "the inhabitants of the earth [who] have been made drunk with the wine of [our] fornication" (Revelation 17:2).

Drunkenness is when you go into the stupor. We have talked about this in my course on the book of Jeremiah. In that course we deal at length with drunkenness. Isaiah and Jeremiah are all the time talking about the drunkenness of God's people. It is not the drunkenness where you drink alcoholic beverages.

The whole nation was drunk. They were drunk because God said they were drunk. But why were they drunk? because they were not focused, they were not alert, and they were stumbling around in life like drunken people. A person with the mind of Christ sets his goal, locks his teeth down, and pursues after Jesus. That is not drunkenness. But when you are wandering around wondering what to do, that is drunkenness, and the inhabitants of the world have been made drunk through *the wine of our fornication, i.e. upside down kenosis!*

Jill: Where it says, "Sitteth upon many waters," then, is that listening to a lot of different preachers or a lot of false teaching?

V: No, we, the harlot, sit on different denominations and are even accepting of different religions, like atheism, materialism, humanism, progressivism, and political correctness. We accept Santa Claus and the Easter bunny. We celebrate Halloween. Can anyone tell the difference between our Christians and

hell-bound Satan worshipers? We are all on the upside down *kenosis* climbing up by stepping on each other.

Carl: Wine! It says the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries. Again, what does the wine signify?

V: It is the lust for self-indulgence (upside down *kenosis*). You see the kings committed fornication, which is a climb. The kings and the harlot join together in a climb. The harlot is pledged to God but is fornicating with the kings of the earth. She wants temporal power and riches rather than eternal rewards. The inhabitants of the world want the climbing. They lust for the climb. They want it so badly, that they begin to lose all sensitivity to God and eternal things and seek to emulate the kings and the harlot. They become desensitized to sin, salvation, heaven and hell. Basically when the church becomes like the world, then the people of the world see no distinctions and become even more entrenched in political correctness.

Tim: The inhabitants are the church?

V: No, the harlot is the Christian church. She is committing fornication with the kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of the earth are drunk, staggering all around and pursuing the same temporal wealth in total disregard of eternal wealth just like the church. None of the inhabitants know how to go in the right direction, and so they are drunk. If the church is seen to be going in the same direction as they, then there is no incentive for waking up and repenting. The inhabitants are drunk on the wine of our examples.

Harlot on the Beast

Revelation

17:3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: . . .

The wilderness is the same place the woman was, you know, the good woman.

She was in the wilderness. Where is the harlot? In the wilderness! Both of them are in the same place.

Revelation

17:3 ...and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

17:4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

The Beast

The beast has seven heads. Heads are nations. Thus the number seven means all nations. It signifies universality. Thus all nations having a king are those under Satan's sway.

The beast has ten horns. Horns are kings. The number ten means all temporal kings. The only king not under Satan's sway is King Jesus. His Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom that will be guided by Him without the lust for temporal riches.

Does that cup not sound like the chalice with which the Catholics use for the sacrament? And then here are the colors, the scarlet and purple colors, and then all of the jewels and all of the riches and finery. Let me tell you that this woman is sitting on a beast, and all these commentaries that I have been reading are all wrong when it comes to "She is guiding the beast." No, she is not guiding the beast. She is trading her power to control her own destination for riches and political and secular power. Riding on the beast is rewarded with all this finery with the protection of the beast and all manner of glorious stuff, but she does not have any reins to guide the beast. She is just sitting up there. The beast says, "I think I am going to take her into political correctness." She says, "That is fine, just keep the jewels, money, praise, and glory

coming, and I will go wherever you want to go.”

Mystery Babylon

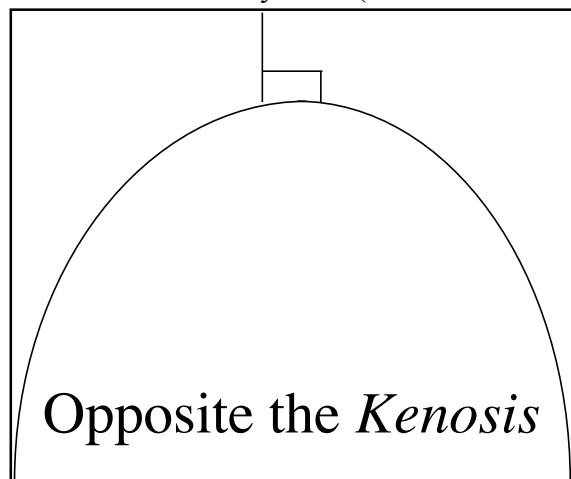
Revelation

17:5 And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, . . .

There is something very mysterious about the church, even the apostate church. It is mysterious. It just keeps on staying alive. It does not disappear, even the apostate church stays in place and prospers and grows. There is a mystery about this. So written on her forehead is MYSTERY. Also written on her forehead is

17:5 . . . BABYLON THE GREAT, . . .

There are two different cities, two different systems. One system is climbing up to a throne (Babylon). The other system (Church) is supposedly following Jesus down to the cross. There is written on the church’s head, however, BABYLON THE GREAT because she is climbing. The apostate church, looks like Babylon. She is identified with the world system (see Chart 11.1), but she is not this system. She certainly is not identified with the kenotic system (see Chart 11.2).



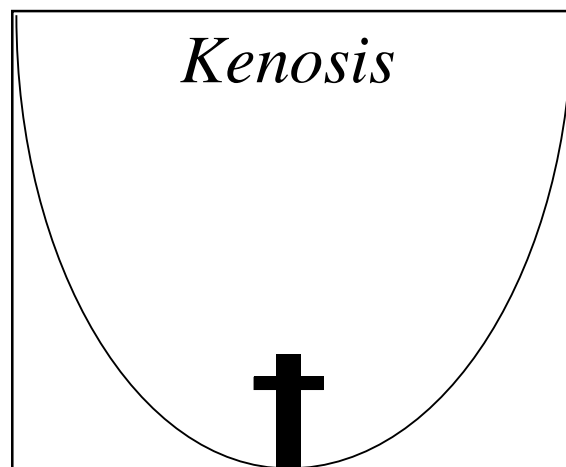
Babylon is the world system that is this upside down *kenosis*. It is a climbing quest for riches and power. (Isaiah 14:13-15)

Chart 11.1

While she is not Babylon, she has BABYLON THE GREAT written on her. Also written on her is . . .

17:5 . . . THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE
EARTH.

Harlotry in the church breeds harlotry and breeds abominations. Whenever you or I become lukewarm in our fellowship of Jesus Christ, we become the mother of harlotry and abominations on the earth. We breed that. When you show a Christian example that is lukewarm and not dedicated to Jesus with your life, you are breeding what we have



The great city, Jerusalem is this, the *kenosis*
(Philippians 2:5-11).

Chart 11.2

today. The church has ushered in what we have here today, and you and I are guilty here. This is a terrible indictment.

Wanda: She is like the beast?

V: Yes, she is somewhat like it. She is adopting the beast’s ways. She is taking the system of the beast. She is climbing in her quest for riches and power, and you cannot tell her apart from anybody else who is climbing. She is sold out to the world system. Instead, there ought to be something that distinguishes the church from the world by

being holy (righteous and set apart for God's exclusive use).

Joe: Harlotry reproduces itself and takes the opposite of the *kenosis*. The Lord's Great Commission says: "Go and make disciples," i.e. go and reproduce *kenotic* Christians.

Henry: Harlotry is just the opposite of the Great Commission.

V: It sure is because we are producing more harlots rather than more disciples.

Revelation

17:6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Please remember that this is a day when John was on the Isle of Patmos in the Spirit worshipping the Lord, and the Lord came up behind him. John turned and saw God and almost fainted to death. The Lord came up and touched him. Then the Lord says, "I am going to give you some signs." Now he is in the midst of the signs.

This vision is only minutes removed from John's encounter with Jesus. However, John is being shown centuries into the future. I want you to remember that John is just getting up off his knees, and the angel comes and whisks him away in the Spirit and starts showing him all these signs. Shortly after seeing the signs, this martyr back on the Isle of Patmos is writing back to the seven churches.

Remember Ephesus is his church. The martyrdom that is going on right there in his day, of which he is one, is his context of life. From that context, he is brought to our time and shown the church. It says here, "When I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." Let me tell you what those words mean. When he saw the church, he was stricken to the point of falling down. He looks! What!!!? Here he is one day away from his context of seeing the church that is suffering

great persecution. One day away from that, then he sees us, and he goes AHHHhhhhhhh. You go back in time to when the lions were eating the saints, and when the saints were being burned alive, then come and take a look at our church. The contrast will stagger you. You will stagger, tear your clothes, fall on your face, and say, "It cannot be!! We are worthless and putrid!"

That woman on the beast is where we are. John's context is a world where Christians are dying and being tortured for their steadfast faith. He is being brought to our time via signs, but he is not escaping time because John has to go back to the Isle of Patmos to die. However he is pulled up in the Spirit and brought all the way to today, and shown what the church of today has become. Jesus gave His life for this mess?! This is what He died for? We are harlots!

John has to go back to the Isle of Patmos, and he is thinking, "Man! I have to warn my people. I have to warn them, that we are going to fall. We are going to become a harlot on the back of the beast."

Dear reader, it is your job to warn the people. I must tell you that if you do not warn your people, God help you. If you are in this class and do not warn your people, I will testify against you. This is absolutely critical. Don't play a hermeneutical trick on this, and say, "Oh, this is not us because we are the bride of Christ. We are spotless—He is just swooning over us because we can tie our own shoes." We think that if we do those hermeneutical tricks that everybody is playing these days, then we can escape our responsibilities. But, listen, brethren, there is going to be that final judgment, and you are not going to escape it. You can become MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. You can do that, you have done that—you have done that at

some time in your life. Some of you are doing it now!

Joe: You know Jesus said, “Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through that gate, but small is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life, and only a few will find it.”²

V: I pray that God will make you the few that find it. It would be a disaster for me to know that you were taking my course, and you did not grab hold of it. I am not talking about getting saved. Do not even think down to that level. I am talking about sanctification and glorification, all the parts and processes of salvation that come after justification. I want you to get that white robe and not be naked.

Pete: Many churches have members that resemble the people in Mystery Babylon.

V: See, this is called “drunkenness” when God described His people in Jeremiah. He talks a lot about Judah’s drunkenness. It was not because they were literally drunk. It was because their lives took on a characteristic of drunkenness. They had no focus on God’s path for them. They were not alert. They were just stumbling around on their quest for power and riches. That is a picture of us today.

Jack: This condition of ours hurts the gospel, and it hurts the Kingdom of God, too. It is a stumbling block because I have had people throw it in my face when I witness to them about Jesus. They say, “Why should I go to church, you are doing the same thing we are doing out here.”

V: We are! We have already had testimony in here about praying for someone who thinks we are hypocrites.³

² Matthew 7:13.

³ Before each class, there was a time of prayer requests and prayers.

Steve: God help us. We need to equip people with the Word of God so that they can apply it in their lives as true disciples.

V: Amen! To be a disciple, one *must* deny self, pick up his cross, and follow Jesus.

An Angel Interprets the Woman on the Beast

Revelation

17:7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Now this beast is not Antichrist. This is Satan and the wonder is the same word as that in verse 6 where John wondered when he saw the harlot. But when he saw the harlot he wondered with great admiration (shock). This wonder in verse 8 is the same verb, but it not nearly to the same extent of shock. This beast is Satan, and his seven heads and ten horns are all the nations and kings of his one-world empire. The woman is the church, and she is riding on the beast. This beast has been reigning over the world (was), was cast into the bottomless pit (is not), and then will come out again at the end of the millennium (yet is).

Heads are Mountains

Revelation

17:9 And here [is] the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

Now we have a mixing of signs. Heads are nations, and mountains are institutions. Now he says the heads are mountains. This is a mixing of signs, so I take the nations, and I take the institutions, and I put them together,

what do I get? I get empires. The seven world empires are: The empire of Assyria, the empire of Babylon, the empire of Persia, the Greek empire, the Roman empire, the present empire, and the empire of Antichrist. These are the seven empires listed in order of their occurrence. We have had, or now have, six of these empires, and we are moving toward the seventh. If you have taken Old Testament Survey or Biblical Backgrounds, you have dealt with all of these empires.

Emperors

Revelation

17:10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, [and] the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

That last king will have a short reign over the seventh empire. That will be the reign of the Antichrist.

Revelation

17:11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, . . .

There is Satan. Satan is the eighth. He is not one of the seven emperor kings running these empires, but he is an eighth. He stands outside of them because he is an invisible power behind the throne. He is the eighth. "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth," but he is of the seven.

Revelation

17:11...and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

Satan is outside of the empires and their emperors, but he is incarnated into Antichrist, and he is of the seven, but he is also the eighth. Now we come to the hard part, the ten horns.

Ten Horns

Revelation

17:12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received

no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

I consider this to be a sudden endowment of power, not a one-hour "length" of power, but a "sudden" endowment of power. These ten horns are ten kings, i.e. all of the temporal power of the final world empire. Right here at this point we have seven as a count when describing seven empires that you can count, but seven means also "all" as in universal. The horns also can be counted when you go to Daniel. Daniel has ten horns, and then a little horn coming up. The little horn uproots three of the horns by the roots and becomes the ruler, the greatest horn of all. There seems to be both symbolic and real numbers here, and this is where I struggle. Are we symbolically looking at ten as in all, or is it a real number ten. It could even be a double entendre. I leave that to you because I have not resolved it in my own mind.

Homer: Do you think that since the beast has so much power, the kings come together and hand their power over to him to affirm his position?

V: Yes, that is the next verse. I had not gotten there yet.

Homer: Going back to Daniel where you have ten horns, and you have the little horn which is the eleventh, uprooting three, gives you back to the eighth which is also the seventh. This would agree numerically with Revelation that declares the beast to be the eighth.

V: Yes, that is good.

Beth: The seven empires; do they coincide with the seven heads of the dragon?

V: Yes, that would be a chronological interpretation in which all the heads would not exist at the same time as a universal power.

Beth: Okay, so do you think that the empire that was slain and came back alive would be the present empire?

V: No, it could be the Roman Empire coming back as the empire of the Antichrist with the ten kings. Instead of an empire, the head could be the German or Russian nations. I do not know.

Revelation

17:13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

These ten horns are going to be united in mind. Christians should be united in mind as well. We are to have the mind of Christ as commanded in Philippians 2 as the *kenosis*. These ten kings are going to have one mind. They are going to be politically correct right down the line. They are going to give their power back to the Antichrist, and the Antichrist is going to be running this one-minded, politically-correct system that is going to be worldwide.

Revelation

17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, . . .

This war is described in the sixth trumpet. It said that the whole world would be gathered to battle, the battle of that great day of God Almighty. The great day is the battle of Armageddon that ushers right into the Great White Throne Judgment which we will look at in the next chapter. The maturing of this sixth trumpet is being described right here as war: "These shall make war with the Lamb."

The Called, Chosen, and Faithful

Revelation

17:14 . . . and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful.

You are called. Many are called, but few are chosen. Fewer yet are faithful. One way

to look at the call is to salvation. The chosen would be those who are saved. The faithful would be those who maintain their confession of faith.

Another way to look at it would be for sanctification. The call would go to those who are among the saved. The chosen would be of those few Christians who respond to the call to sanctification. The faithful would be those even fewer Christians who actually deny themselves, pick up their crosses, and actually follow the Lord in *kenotic* discipleship (see Chart 11.3). These fewer Christians would be accompanying the Lamb in His victory. I think that this is a message to the church to follow Jesus in His path of suffering and sacrifice that leads to death. Thus the called, chosen, and faithful are of God's people. All are called. Few are chosen. The only ones chosen are disciples, those who

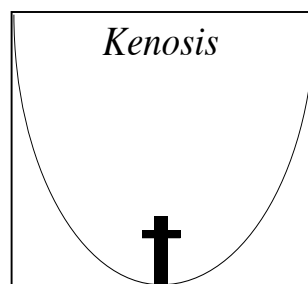


Chart 11.3

deny themselves, pick up their crosses, and follow Jesus. Fewer are faithful. Faithful takes you to the bottom (see Chart 11.3) of the same path that He followed.

The martyrs that are under the altar were crying out, "How long, Oh, God, how long?" The answer is not only until all those who have been called and chosen for salvation, but also those who follow the Lord until they are martyred. They just keep on keeping on. You are being called, some of you are being chosen, fewer of you will be faithful. The ball is in your court. Will you answer the call to be chosen as a disciple, and further yet, will you be faithful?

We are not playing games here. What we are dealing with here is life and death. It is so real I can see the flames. I can see the cross. I see people running the other way, carrying a

banner that says **CHRISTIAN**. They are running the wrong way. The more the saints run the wrong way, the more harlotry and abominations are being bred in the church. Now we are coming to a time in our life when to be accepted by the church is going to go against your creed, your faith, your confession. You are not going to be able to accept the apostasy. The persecutors and politically correct “Christians” will have no problem. We are coming to that in this next chapter of Revelation.

Beth: Christians follow the same pattern as a gas pump that has three different gases: regular, mid-grade, and super. What kind of believer are you going to be, regular, mid-grade, or super? The price determines the quality: the greater the price, the greater the quality.

V: Good understandable analogy, Beth.

The Waters

Revelation

17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

These waters are not just one language, one race, or one nation. They are a world-wide religion. Waters signify the mixing of all the world's religions into a one-world religion.

Ten Horns, Beast, and Woman

Revelation

17:16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

17:17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

17:18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

This harlot is the apostate church against whom the final empire of Antichrist is going to turn and destroy. The apostate church, the politically correct church that is in league with Satan and following Antichrist and worshipping Antichrist, is going to be destroyed by the empire of Antichrist because there is still the mystery of the church within it.

Speckled Bird Analogy of the Church

Consider the speckled bird in Jeremiah 12.⁴ Jeremiah told the nation of Judah that they were a speckled bird and were going to be pecked to death by the surrounding nations. All of the birds are going to look at Judah which is like the other birds except for a tiny distinction. Judah will bear the name of God (specks). Because of those specks, the other birds are going to peck Judah to death.

The same thing happens with the apostate church. It follows the speckled bird analogy all over again. The ten kings are going to turn against and destroy that church which is supporting them and their plan, fornicating with them, and is doing everything just exactly the way Antichrist wants them to do. The members of this church will have been meeting together as the mysterious conglomerate church worshipping an idol in their perverted way of political correctness. However, the kings are going to destroy her because of her name, church, not because of her behavior, not because of her ideology, not because of her credo or doctrine or anything, but because of her name “God’s church.” The kings are going to kill her.

The church is already up there on that beast reigning and being glorified and carrying all the jewels and wealth and praise of men, but there is coming a time when all of

⁴ Jeremiah 12:9.

her lovers are going to turn against her. She is going to lose everything. You could be part of that harlot riding the beast, but there is going to come a time, regardless of how politically correct you get, when the beast is going to turn upon you, his lover, and destroy you.

Joe: Do you think that even though it is an apostate church because there could be some Christians there, the Spirit of God is still there, and that is the mystery?

V: The true Christians will have come out of her. But there is still going to be this destruction, and I believe the destruction is going to come about because of the name church, church of God. Satan is going to bring about that destruction because he wants nothing to do with the church of God, even the apostate church that is following and worshiping him. Right now while she is on the back of the beast. He is using the church to gain his ends. If the church breeds harlots, Satan is going to say, "Bring them on! I will encourage this church as long as harlotry and abominations are being bred by the church." He will use her as long as she is useful to him. He is going to achieve his ends through the church, through the harlot. But when he is through with her, he will turn against her.

In the speckled bird analogy, there is identification yet with distinction. The apostate church is identified with Babylon, with the beast, with Antichrist, with the empire, but yet there is distinction. That distinction, even though it is in name only, will bring about the harlot's annihilation.

REVELATION 18

Fall of Babylon's Church

Revelation

18:1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

18:2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

18:3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

At this point in Revelation 18, the harlot is already being called Babylon. Instead of just having the name written on her head, she is identified now as Babylon. However, ***she is not Babylon***. You need to see this. She is being called Babylon because of her close relationship and characteristics with Babylon. She is fornicating with the kings of the earth, and the merchants of the earth have gotten rich through their relationships with her.⁵

God calls His Saints Out of Babylon's Church

Revelation

18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

God commands all Christians to come out of that perverted institution. This is an interesting situation because if you have the world here (see Chart 11.4), and you have people in it who are called out (saved) to make the church. Then the *ecclesia* is already

⁵ Babylon is the world's system. I believe that America with all of its wonderful enticements to the people of the world to fornicate with her is the Babylon of the world. It is likewise for the harlot church which is mirroring America's Babylonian enticements for the people to cleave to her for fulfilling their lusts. Instead of being set aside for God's use, the church has redefined sanctification into being set aside for the church's lust for nickels and noses and acceptability by the world.

the called out ones. What if the church becomes the world, then we have need of another calling out. The definition of holiness is **separation unto God's use of a righteous people**, who are called and set apart. When He calls us out of the world to make a new city Jerusalem, and we become so perverted that the new city becomes Babylon once again, then there is a need for another calling out. He says, then, to the real Christians in the apostate church, "Come out of there." This time the calling will involve death to the saints because they choose to follow God rather than Antichrist. So now you have the called, chosen, and faithful dead. This is the point at which you will get your head whacked off.

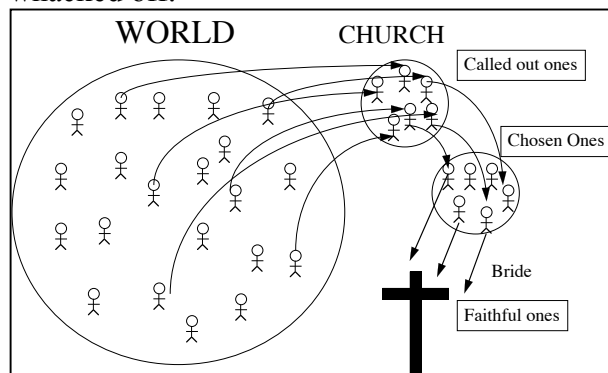


Chart 11.4

Let us go on a little further.

Revelation

18:5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

18:6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

18:7 How much she hath glorified herself,
...

This is talking about how the apostate church has mistreated true Christians. This is payback time for that institution's evils of self glorification and persecution of the saints.

Revelation

18:7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

Do you hear that same thing today, folks? The harlot says that she will see no sorrow: "The church does not have to worry about it. The church is going to be raptured. We are not going to see any of this stuff in the book of Revelation! Do not worry about it. Cool it. It is going to be all right. We are not going to have any sorrow and pains and suffering. A great revival is coming!" Are we listening to the harlot? We do not know when the rapture is coming. All we know is that it occurs at the last trumpet. We do not know when that trumpet will blow. So, we must prepare for the worst and pray for the best. Get tough, class!

Revelation

18:8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong [is] the Lord God who judgeth her.

18:9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

Strangely, the kings⁶ are the first ones to grieve over the harlot's destruction because they are the ones who fornicated directly with her in a love-hate relationship. They hate her connection to God, but they love making money off her. They will be the first ones affected by the loss of the harlot because they will lose her political support. The kings of the earth are going to be mourning and lamenting their loss of income.

⁶ If ten is an actual number, then I think that these kings would be smaller kings who are subordinate to Antichrist's ten kings who rule the world.

Revelation

18:10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

18:11 And the merchants . . .

The merchants of the world are those who profit from the church. A large section of the economy derives from religious merchandise. Also there are those within the church who make large profits by merchandising in religious paraphernalia. They are extensions of Balaam, the profit prophet. Sadly, religious merchandising extends all the way to the bottom, i.e. into merchandizing in the souls of men.

Merchandising in souls

Revelation

8:11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

18:12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

18:13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

Merchandising in souls is what the harlot has been and is going to be doing. How can I get money? I can get money as a pastor by selling your souls. Pastors, listen to this. Are you going to trade the souls of your congregation for money? The temptation is going to be there. Temper our sermons, tickle their ears, get yourself some raises and a parsonage and a new car. All you have to do is sell the souls of your congregation.

Paul: Build elaborate buildings, family life centers that will rival any health club

facility No wonder John almost passed out.

V: But if that is what you want, the trade is there for you. Sunday school teachers, if that is what you want, the trade is there for you. Parents, if that is what you want, the trade is there for you. I am telling you, if you sell the souls of your people, you are going to pay for eternity. This merchandising in the souls of men is a staggering thing to me. Making slaves of your people to your agenda is merchandizing in the souls of men. Get your values right. One soul is worth more than all the money in the world.

Revelation

18:14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

People who begin to see things in relation to their eternity place a diminishing value on the things. In fact, things begin to have no value. Thus, this statement is eternal: Gold will be used as street pavement in heaven.

Revelation

18:15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

18:16 And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, . . .

That great harlot church, which in partnership with Babylon/America made the merchants of the world rich, will be in great torment under the persecution of her lover, Antichrist. Those merchants will not come to her aid because of their fear of Antichrist.

Revelation

18:16 ...that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

18:17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, . .

.

Who are the shipmasters? You are, you pastors who are guiding your ship in the sea

Revelation

18:17 . . . and all the company in ships, . .

.

. . . all those people in the pews of local churches.

Revelation

18:17 . . . and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18:18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What [city is] like unto this great city!

Still a mystery, what city could be like this city? The sailors and those who trade by sea are the vocational ministers who derive their income from the church.

Revelation

18:19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

18:20 Rejoice over her, [thou] heaven, and [ye] holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast [it] into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

18:22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft [he be], shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

18:23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

Deception is coming through this false apostate church. She has been and is deceiving the nations. Her harlotry is breeding harlotry. Now God's judgment on the apostate institutional church is going to be delivered via Antichrist. The church fornicated with Antichrist, kings, and merchants. She became a harlot for anyone who could pay her price.

Revelation

18:24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

If you go back in history and look at the most wonderful people who have ever lived, Rome and the church has destroyed them. Some of the best people that have ever lived! It started with Jesus Christ, killed by Rome and the Jews, the people of God.

REVELATION 19

Revelation

19:1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

19:2 For true and righteous [are] his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

19:3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

If these people in this apostate church had been saved, we would have had a case for losing your salvation. But, you see, I believe that the true saints will be called out, and that this will be a truly apostate church that will be made up of politically correct people, and that they will go to the lake of fire. Their smoke will ascend forever and ever. That is the way I am seeing this. This apostasy is so extensive that after the saints come out, there is nothing left but politically correct worshipers of Antichrist in the institutional, univer-

sal church. That is why I have no problem with the smoke of her rising up for eternity.

Revelation

19:4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

19:5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, . . .

. . . that voice is from us, guys. The voice of many waters means the saved people of many nations, cultures, races, and denominations.

Revelation

19:6 . . . and as the voice of mighty thunderings, . . .

. . . that thundering could represent God's voice as spoken by all the glorified saints.

Revelation

19:6 . . . saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Now we come to the marriage of the Lamb. What are the ideas presented under the symbol "marriage of the Lamb?"

1. Rejoicing and honor, verse 7.
2. The bride in fine linen, verse 8.
3. The blessedness of the bride, verse 9.
4. The marriage supper of the Lamb, verse 9.

Those four descriptions or ideas are presented in this marriage of the Lamb. The bride is the original called out ones, which will include the chosen ones plus the faithful ones (refer back to Chart 11.4). These are the descriptions of the bride who is going to be in that marriage supper along with those who have died along the way.

Chapter Questions

1. What is the great city?
2. Who is riding on the beast?
3. Describe Vial #7.
4. Describe the scarlet beast.
5. Describe Mystery Babylon.
6. Who is the mother of harlots?
7. What are heads? Mountains?
8. If there are seven heads on the beast, how can Satan be one of them and the eighth as well?
9. Interpret the called, chosen, and faithful of Revelation 17:14.
10. How does Jeremiah's speckled bird analogy apply to the church?
11. How does the church merchandise in men's souls?

Chapter 12

FINAL VICTORY OF THE LAMB

I am reverting to the Apostolic kind of preaching that is basically the same as reading the Bible. It is the old kind of preaching that served us so well for many centuries. Sometimes it was singing the Scriptures as they are.

What I will do is read Scripture and talk about them. I will also correlate some Scripture. It will not be a typical sermon where you have four points and a poem.

Revelation

19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

19:12 His eyes [were] as a flame of fire, and on his head [were] many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

19:13 And he [was] clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

19:14 And the armies [which were] in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

19:16 And he hath on [his] vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

This passage is dealing with the second coming of Christ. The second coming is separate from the rapture that occurred at the last trumpet. This time we have the coming of Christ and the armies with Him. These armies are composed of the glorified saints, and they are clothed in white linen, and that is explained in verse 8 of the same chapter —“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the

fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” This verse is a description of the saints, and I believe that you and I will be among this group riding these horses coming back to earth. This is the second coming, the Lord is coming to set his throne up on earth, and there is going to be a reign upon the earth by the Lord and the saints.

His army is coming here to earth with Him. Note that wherever the Lord goes, there is going to be war. There is going to be an eruption of some kind of turmoil, conflict, and war.

Therefore, guess what is going to happen next. The battle of Armageddon is just waiting to happen. It is going to happen as soon as the Lord and His saints come back to earth.

ARMAGEDDON

Revelation

19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

19:18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all [men, both] free and bond, both small and great.

19:19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

When the Lord does come back to set up reign here with us, there is going to be mounted against Him the world's armies. There will be many kings and many soldiers. This is going to be a power battle. They are going to have guns and all kinds of carnal weapons, and they are going to come as if

they are going to take the world from the Lord. They are going to try to do it with force. That has been Satan's strategy since the git-go; to use carnal force by those he has deceived. Now our power is a spiritual power. It is a sword that comes out of the Lord's mouth that wields God's power, but it is going to be a spiritual power that is going to be undefeatable by all this carnal power being mounted against Him by the Antichrist. That description of carnal power is in verse 19: "And I saw the beast." That is the Antichrist.

We have seen this beast described in another chapter. Here he is with all of his political power that is coming against the Lord and against us. If power could be in the form of bullets and guns and things like this, then this Antichrist would be an unstoppable kind of force. He will have all of the armies of the world and kings and soldiers and tanks and all that kind of thing. But this kind of power cannot defeat spiritual things. A bullet can kill your body, but it cannot kill your spirit. Then in verse 20 we see the results of the war.

The Beast and False Prophet

Revelation

19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Pick up on the word "deceived" here. This has been where the saints who have spiritual power are being defeated. This is where you are being defeated. It is in the realm of deception. Deception by its very nature, you see, cannot be understood by the deceived person. If you know where you are deceived, you could get that out of your life and believe the truth.

Every one of you reading this book and on this planet is deceived. There has been only one perfect theologian. We are not He. Every one of us has some elements of deception in our lives. It is our job to root that out. That is why we have seminary classes, that is why you have Sunday school classes, that is why you have open dialogue with your peers. As you open yourself to the truth, these deceptions will begin to surface, and you can discard them.

If it is a pet theological doctrine that is in error, you will need to discard that error and rebuild your systematic theology. Do not demand that your system fit together with an erroneous doctrinal plank in there. Do not do that. At least have the integrity to tear your system down, discard the faulty plank, and rebuild. If you will do that, you will root out the errors in your system. You can rest assured of one thing; you will never get it all out. Just keep on keeping on.

The beast and the false prophet are defeated in this final battle, Armageddon, and they are cast into the lake of fire. At this point they are out of the way. The beast and the false prophet, two of the evil trinity have been cast into the lake of fire. There will not be any more problems with them.

What about all those kings and armies?

Revelation

19:21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which [sword] proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

All these kings and armies that were with the beast and the false prophet are going to be killed by the sword that comes out of the Lord's mouth. They are given life, and existence by the sword that comes out of His mouth, and they are given an execution by the sword that comes out of His mouth.

The false prophet and the Antichrist are in the lake of fire. The kings and all of their army are dead now. It sounds like it is time for the millennium, but there is one person left that is going to be a problem. If we are going to have the millennium, that thousand-year reign of peace, what are we going to do about Satan himself, the third person of the evil trinity? That comes up in chapter 20.

REVELATION 20

The Devil

Revelation

20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Prior to this we had then the beast and the false prophet who deceived us, who has deceived the world into taking the mark. You remember I talked to you about taking the spiritual mark and then the physical mark. All of that is through deception, and we are being deceived now. Those two deceivers are, at this point, in the lake of fire.

Now here is Satan, the mastermind of deception. He gets sealed up in the bottomless pit for the next thousand years. There is not going to be any more of this deception going on all over the place. Everything will be straight up and down. When you say something, you mean what you say, and you say what you mean. There is going to be some clarification of hearing. I look forward to that kind of time. Now let's look at the description of the millennial reign.

The Millennium

Revelation

20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

There may be some bad news here for you and me. The souls of those who reign with the Lord here could very well be just those who were beheaded because you see it says that "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Who is the "they"? "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." If it is these that He is describing, "and I saw the souls of them," and the "them" are the ones that are beheaded, "and they lived and reigned," if the "they" is referring to the "them," then we are looking at a reign comprised of only the martyrs. That is the bad news.

The good news is only my opinion. I opine that the "they" is referring to all those on the white horses that came with Him, and stood against the attack of Antichrist and the armies. So the "they," in my mind, refers to the masses of saints who wear the white linen. Now I have another little bit of bad news for you. The bad news is, you have to decide.

Be aware that this could very well be a millennial reign by the martyrs, those who have demonstrated a loyalty that is honorable and deserving of reigning with the Lord. Not just an ontological new birth reigning, but it could very well be a reigning only by those who have given much. We have talked about

the *kenosis* in here. The *kenosis* is the doorway to reigning. You remember how the model goes? The reign would be after the

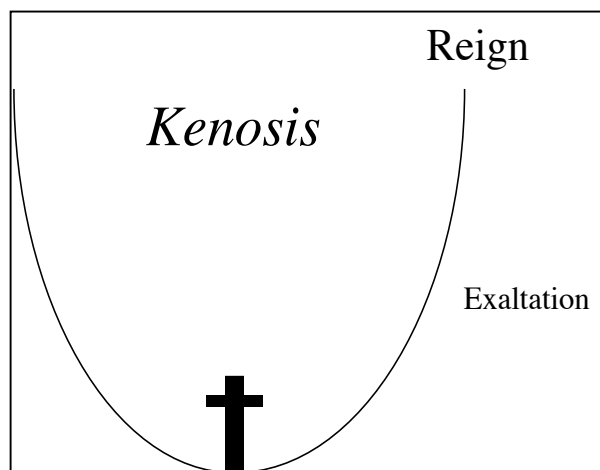


Chart 12.1

cross and exaltation like this Chart 12.1 shows. You remember the other model, the opposite of the *kenosis*? There is no reigning after the fall from the throne. There is therefore a possibility here that reigning comes with martyrdom. It depends upon what the “they” is pointing back to.

Revelation

20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This [is] the first resurrection.

20:6 Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

I am going to leave it to you to discern whether there are two kinds of resurrection for two kinds of saints. Those who have practiced self-sacrifice, self-denial, pick up your cross and follow Him (Matthew 16:24) are disciples who reign. These have fine, white linen clothes. The martyrs are a subset of this group in my opinion.

What do the saints on the upside-down *kenosis* have? They have disgrace, they have loss, they have no clothes, they have nothing.

Do they reign? Not hardly. Do the ones on the *kenosis* reign? You bet!

Could there be two groups of saints? I think positively yes: saints who reign and saints who do not reign? The first resurrection could be for these who will be reigning in the millennium. The other group of saints may not be raised until the last resurrection. It could be. I do not know, but we must make a decision here. Every one of us has to come up with an answer. My answer is that the martyrs will sit on the thrones. Reporting to them will be the kenotic Christians. The remaining saints will be mere spectators.

Satan Loosed

We come now to the end of the millennium when Satan is going to be loosed. There will be all manner of people who are going to be born and raised up in the millennial reign. They are going to have conversations with us. Each one of you will be involved in this millennial reign *if* I am correct. If I am correct, you are going to be put in charge of a group of people as part of your reigning with Christ. Now I understand that you might get to be so high that you will be in charge of a state, a whole state. Somebody here could be in charge of Texas. I am putting in for the state of Georgia. That is where I came from. There are other states open. You can bid on them via the *kenosis*.

Wanda: I have a question. This is Christ’s return. So are there still people in heaven? We know that He comes with saints dressed in white to reign on earth. But is there still a heaven, and are there still saints there?

V: Okay, that is what you are going to have to answer. That is basically the question that I have introduced here about the unprofitable saints not being raised until the second resurrection.

The Final War

I want to move to problems that accompany the loosing of Satan because you remember he has been in the bottomless pit for a thousand years now. When he is loosed there is going to be all manner of disruption and deception loosed upon the earth again. If I am in charge of a group of people, I am going to be teaching them for a thousand years that Satan is in the bottomless pit, but he will be coming out. You are not going to be able to see him. He is going to be the great mastermind deceiver. He has deceived the billions throughout history. He is going to deceive people once again, and you are going to be deceived.

I am going to be telling my people, “You are going to be deceived!” I am going to teach with the same kind of urgency that I teach now. I am going to be hammering it in and continually telling them that Satan is going to be loosed, and he is going to go around the nations and deceive everybody on this planet except the resurrected saints.

I want you to know how this thing is going to shake down. There is going to be another battle when he is loosed. The battle is going to erupt when Satan deceives the people into thinking that Christ and His saints are not running this planet right, and that they need to take over and straighten it out. Basically, I will want my people to promise that they are not going to fall prey to this deception. “Please talk to me before you make a drastic decision as to joining with these armies to make an attack against the Lord.” I am going to teach hard. I am going to teach the history of the church, the history of Israel and Judah, I am going to teach them doctrine, I am going to teach them the *kenosis*, I am going to teach them about the upside-down *kenosis*, I am going to teach them everything that I know. I will have a thousand years to get it done. But I am going to tell them, “No matter how much you know, you are going to be deceived just

like I was deceived, just like all of our saints, the brotherhood, has been deceived. Now I want you to have this in mind.” As we come to this point here in verse 7, this deception is what is going to happen as soon as Satan is loosed.

Revelation

20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom [is] as the sand of the sea.

By this time the population of the earth over a thousand-year period will have grown like the sands of the sea. And sure enough he is going to go out, and he is going to deceive them, and the deception is, “Let us go against the Lord and the saints. Let us just go and take over this whole planet.” And for some reason, they are going to follow his lead just like you guys are now doing it. When Satan deceives you and tells you, “Let us go and do this stupid thing,” you go and do that stupid thing. Why? Because you are convinced in your mind that it is a good thing. That is what these people will do as well. It is deception, and here they come in verse 9,

Revelation

20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

I imagine the scene will be something like this (I am going to go literal on you for a minute): the Lord has called all of us to a meeting. He says, “All saints on the planet come here to Jerusalem, we are going to have a meeting.” So we all go to the meeting, and at that time when we are all there, Satan is going to say, “Now is our chance. Let’s go get them. We can surround them (it says “compassed”). They are going to surround us

and have us cornered and ready to be killed. Without our help, the Lord's fire is going to come from heaven and devour them.

Now I have gone literal at this time, and how that shakes down into the signs when we bring this back on as signs, I do not know. The easiest way is to go literal. But we need to see these descriptions as signs. To do so, we need to address these questions: What does it mean fire from heaven? What does it mean to "compass" the saints and the Holy City round about? I think that it will be a repeat of what is going on now—secularization and upside down *kenosis* as the context of our social structure and culture.

God's fire from heaven is the end of that attack, and then we have in verse 10,

Revelation

20:10 And the devil that deceived them . . .

.

You see how that word, "deceived," just keeps popping up over and over again.

Revelation

20:10 . . . was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet [are], and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

The lake of fire is in a specific location. Those two guys, the beast and the false prophet, from the battle of Armageddon that was a thousand years earlier, are already in the lake of fire. At the end of this final battle, at the end of the millennial reign, Satan himself is cast in there. So all three of the evil trinity are gone forever. They are going to burn and be in torment forever and ever.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Now I will take you on a little trip via a word picture. Draw it in your mind. It is going to be accurate enough for you that when we come to this point in history, and everybody is going to come to this point, you

are going to say, "This is it" because it is going to be burned into your mind so that you will recognize it right away. I want you to give me the freedom to give you a human interpretation of this future historical event because there is not going to be anybody that can get every detail right. I am going to get it as close as I possibly can, and if I get a detail wrong, please forgive me because I cannot guarantee every detail. You will recognize, however, what I am going to tell you.

The Scene

I want you to look at Chart 12.2 and imagine a huge open expanse of territory, a level territory of ground. Overlooking that ground, lifted way up high and majestic, is a great white throne. Sitting upon that throne is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in His majesty. All out in front of this great, open expanse will soon be the people of the earth who are going to be judged. Compassing the whole area will be angels to guarantee the sanctity of what is going to happen here and to secure the area against exit. There will be no interference because the angels will secure the entire area.

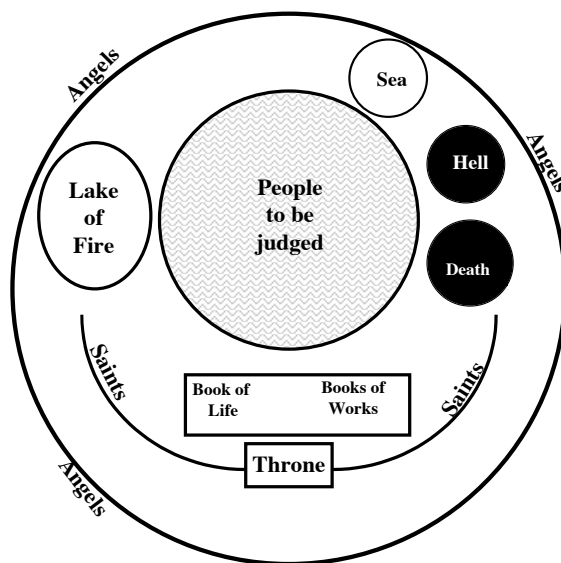


Chart 12.2

All out in front of the throne will soon be the people who are going to be judged. They will be wondering, "What is going on?" because it is going to be a soul-trembling kind of experience. All will sense that this is something that is extremely important, extremely nerve-wracking. Much anxiety will be erupting up into the souls of the people.

All out here to the right of the throne, and all out to the left will be the lines of saints. Everybody who is saved is going to be lined up on either side of the throne. There will be a saint at the right hand of Jesus. There will be one on the other side as well. Those saints will be adjacent to the arm of Jesus. His hand could even rest on your shoulder if you are in one of those places of honor.

The more you consistently implement the *kenosis* in your life, the closer you will be to the Lord. The more you live this life for yourself, the further you will be from Him. If you have not taken the pains and the sufferings and the cross of Christ with self-denial and self-sacrifice, then the further out you go in the line. That is where those who have lived in the upside down *kenosis* will stand. They may have had a religiousness where their tongue was close to Him, but their heart was far distant. All out to the right and to the left, way out as far as you can see will be these two lines of saints.

There is going to be a sense of expectation on both the people and the saints because, you see, you who will be in this line are going to know what is going to happen. Your knees are going to begin to tremble, and there is going to be an anxiety for this is the moment of dread. There are going to be the tears and all of that because there are going to be people in that group of unsaved people out front that you know. They will look up at you, and they will be wondering why you are in the line up there and they are down in front.

There may even be conversation between you and them.

This is the setting of the Great White Throne, and Jesus is sitting on it as Lord and Judge. The saints are lined up on each side based on where their hearts were and what their performance has been on this planet in their lifetime.

Up in front there is going to be this big table with one big book called the Book of Life. This judgment, however, is the judgment of works. So, on the table will be many books of works. There are going to be all of these things in this scene, and the people are going to be coming up out of hell and being put here in this area in front of the throne to be judged. The angels are going to pull them up out of hell to put them here. The most evil people to have ever lived will be put there. Also, there will be all manner of good grandpa's out there, all manner of good grandpa's and good Samaritans, all manner of religious people, people that have not robbed and stolen and murdered and done all those bad things. There will be some decent people out there, but they are not saved.

Revelation

20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

You see, as these people are standing all out in front of the throne; they glance up at the throne, but they cannot look upon holiness because they are unholy. Even the earth cannot look upon absolute holiness because the earth, too, has fallen. Even the heaven cannot look upon absolute holiness because it too has fallen. You see the only thing that can look upon holiness is holiness itself. There is found no room for them. The people know that there is something happening. They cannot look up. They glance up but have to divert their eyes. There is no place found for them.

The Process

Not only are we to witness this process of judgment, we are also going to participate in it. One at a time each person is going to be called by name—"John Doe, come up here." Two angels will go out there and get him, pull and drag him up, screaming and kicking. They will open up the Book of Works, and they are going to read what John Doe did. John Doe may be your daddy, son, brother, etc., and they are going to read all about John Doe, all that he has done, all his works.

Please note that everybody goes through two judgments: the judgment of personhood and the judgment of works. When you die as a lost person, your personhood is already judged, and you are taken to hell. Hell is like jail. For example, you commit a burglary, and the police get you, and they take you to jail. Then they take you to court where they try you, judge you, and then they take you to prison. Jail is hell. The great white throne judgment is court, and the lake of fire is prison. That is the process

The people are going to be judged on their works (Book of Works). The sentence will be pronounced: "You are condemned to eternity in the lake of fire." You will be set aside for execution. Then the next one is called. The small and the great, those who have been good people, and those who have been bad people are each judged. Slaves are going to be judged; free people are going to be judged; everybody out there is going to be judged. They are going to be judged on the basis of their works. Their personhood was judged before they died. They were guilty; they died in their sin; they went to hell to be held for trial; now they are coming to judgment of what they did. After this judgment, they are going to the lake of fire. This judgment is done on their works.

Revelation

20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books

were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; . . .

Remember that the sea is the church. The dead coming out of it are the spiritually dead people in the church. They come out of the church because they are going to be judged.

Revelation

20:13 . . . and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: . . .

When the people die physically, and they are condemned, they go to hell. What about death? Death delivered up the people in it also. Death is composed of the people who are walking around not physically dead but spiritually dead. The dead people in the church realm of life are those in the sea. The sea gives up the dead who are in it. The death area gives up the dead who are in it. Both of these sets of people are physically alive, and then hell gives up the dead who are in it. They are the physically dead people. Here are all the unsaved people from the sea, death, and hell who will compose all of this mass of humanity out in front of the great white throne.

Revelation

20:13 . . . and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

This is a works judgment, and so each one of these that come out of those three realms are judged according to their works, condemned to the lake of fire, and set aside for execution.

The Execution of Death and Hell

Then we come to the time of execution. What is going to happen? Death and hell are going to be executed prior to these people. I

do not know if death and hell are locations or if they are demons who are in charge of those realms. It seems that the realms are being personified here. I do not know what the answer is. I leave that to you as another question that needs to be answered. But whatever it is, a location or an angel who is in charge of that location, or a personified realm, death and hell are going to be snatched up and cast into the lake of fire. When that happens there is going to be an awakening of those awaiting their execution because when they see death and hell cast into the lake of fire, their anxiety will escalate: "I do not want to go to the lake of fire." Panic will erupt. I want you to see this in verse 14.

The Appeals

Revelation

20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

As soon as death and hell go into the lake of fire, these that are awaiting execution are going to look over there and panic. They have been hearing a lot of screaming all of this time from the lake of fire since the beginning of judgment and execution, and it is going to dawn on them that somebody is already in that place. That is the lake of fire! That screaming was from the evil trinity. It is going to be a wailing, eerie scream. Continuous with no let up, and then when death and hell are snatched up and cast in there, all of a sudden this one will say, "Oh, my," and he is going to run up to the throne, "Oh, Lord, Lord, don't you remember that I was in the church, and I was a deacon, and I did many good things? I fed the poor, and I have a ten-year perfect attendance pin from Sunday school. I did everything right." These kinds of appeals will come at that panic time when the condemned realize that their eternity is to be there in that terrible place. That is when it is going to dawn on them: the sheer terror of what lies in front of them. Look at Matthew 7:22-23:

Matthew

7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

This is going to be the appeal process, this is the day of the Lord that is described in Matthew 7, the day of the Lord is this day, the day of the great white throne judgment. Take note that when you see the great white throne judgment, you will remember what we are talking about right here right now. Now is a preview of when all of our eternity will come to a point.

Appeals by Religious People

Here are these religious types. God forbid that one of you be one of these. Don't be someone that is in one of my classes that could end up out here making an appeal, "I went to seminary. Oh, Lord, Lord, I went to seminary. I did everything. I knew all about the *kenosis*, I got a hundred on the test!" Beloved, that is not going to count. You have to get it right, now.

These religious people are going to make their appeal based on religion. That does not wash, because Jesus is the basis. One at a time they are going to make this appeal. I believe angels are going to be executing these religious types, and I believe that as they hear the verdict from Matthew 7: "I never knew you; depart from me," I believe the angels are going to open up the Book of Life, and they will say, "This is where your name should have been, right here in this place reserved for you." Jesus will say, "My blood bought your salvation, and your name is not in there. You wanted to go your own way, do it your way, but here is where I made a way for you, and your name is not in there." Each one of these religious types will make that appeal. After a

look in the Book of Life, they will hear: "Depart from me, I never knew you." There will be a spot for your name, but there will be no name written.

Executions of Religious People

The angels will execute each one by casting each into the lake of fire. Over and over again, all of these who think they have a religious appeal. These that have an inside track based on religion are going to make their appeal on a religious basis. They are going to be executed. I believe they are going to be executed by the angels because I think that they have been warned. They have heard the Gospel, they have been in church, they have been in seminary, they have had every opportunity, and they squandered it. They have determined to do it their own way. Therefore, their blood and their execution will be required at the hands of God's executioners.

Verse 15 of Revelation is based on the appeal.

Revelation

20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

That was the group that appealed. After that group made their appeal and was found not written in the Book of Life, they were cast in, and then come the executions that are so horrifying in my mind.

Executions of Non-religious People

Man, I want to tell you something: this next part gives me the shivers because when we are in line with the saints, we are seeing our loved ones, our friends, our co-workers being executed, and how the first group were the ones that you sat beside in church. They were with you in Sunday school. You saw them in the pews when you preached your sermons and looked out at the congregation. You were so sure that they were saved. They

were not saved, however, because they were depending on the wrong thing.

Now we come to the other part, I know it is coming. I am going to be out here in this line of saints. I will be weeping and agonizing because the first group was hard enough for me to watch. They were the religious ones who had heard the Word. But the next group is the ones that are really going to be hard on me. These are the ones that should have been warned. These are the ones that are our responsibility. These are the ones we were supposed to go tell, but we did not.

Everybody in the line of saints is going to be weeping. You will be weeping because you have heard this, you will be falling down on your face, groveling in the dirt, weeping, agonizing because He is going to call your name! The Lord is going to call your name. He will say, "Bill, come here." I will have to get up in front of all of you and walk up there, and He is going to say, "That lady right there; that one is yours. You lived next door to her and did not tell her. **You** execute her." She is going to look at me like I have horns. She will say, "How could you let this happen?" What am I going to say? That I was scared? That will not wash. I did not have time? I did not know what to say? But because I did not give the person warning, I will have to cast that person into the lake of fire.

If you could reverse the scenario: your neighbor is up here in the line of saints, and you are out there standing with the condemned, the neighbor is going to throw you into the lake of fire, what are you going to say to him? "What kind of friend are you? What kind of Christian are you? You are a sorry excuse. You lived by me, and you let me go to the lake of fire without any warning?" Imagine how **you** would feel if the situation were reversed.

In the real process, however, you will have to take that neighbor and cast him into the lake of fire. What about you fathers?

You have a daughter: “Daddy, you mean I have to go there, and you did not do anything for me except take me to church and Sunday school? That is all you did? Daddy, how could you let this happen to me?” What are you going to say to your daughter as you cast her into the lake of fire? You mothers, do you have a son? “Mama, how could you let this happen?” You husbands, you have a wife? Are you going to leave things to chance? Are you just going to take them and pass them through Sunday school and church and hope that something takes, or are you going to tear down the strongholds? Are you going to charge hell? Are you going to get after it and make sure things happen? Are you going to make sure that your loved ones know and have an opportunity? If you love anybody, you had better think about the lake of fire. Help them avoid that before it is too late, because we are talking about eternity. It says here in Ezekiel 3:17-19 that *you have to execute them*.

Ezekiel

3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked [man] shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

The first group made their appeals on religion. They are those whom you have warned, and they have heard, and they have made a choice, and their choice is to reject. The angels execute them. But there is this other group, the group that has not heard, that has not made an obvious choice. Those are your responsibility to warn, and they were not

warned. They still have to be executed even though they were not warned, but their blood is going to be required at your hands. That execution is a hard thing to face, but you had better face it now while it is easy because this judgment is coming when it will not be so easy. This passage is a requirement that we warn the wicked. If we do not, we will have to execute them.

When we see this day, you are going to remember everything I have said here. This scene is going to be burned in your mind, and you are going to carry it with you for the rest of your life. I pray that it will be such a haunting thing that you will take steps against having to execute your loved ones.

Make sure your people are notified. Preach to your relatives. Witness to your neighbors and co-workers. Obtain Gospel tracts and get them out everywhere. You meet somebody; give him or her a tract. If you cannot talk to them, give them a tract! If you do not meet them, lay out a secret-agent tract for someone to discover. You get these people saved because if you do not, they are going to the lake of fire.

Our Overwhelming Grief

So here we are up here near the throne, weeping and still just trembling. The execution has been completed and now all the condemned are in the lake of fire. We hear all this screaming and carrying on. You are up here, and you have been executing people, and some of you on the ends of the lines have had to make the most treks up to the front, and when you make a trek, you walk in front of us in the line. You have had to run the gauntlet. Remember how it was: here are all the saints. God calls your name, and you come up here, and you are weeping, and the saints are weeping, and feeling the disgrace. Everybody is thinking: “Why did you not do something?” That is what they are feeling. After you execute the person, and then you

make the walk all the way down to your spot in line. Before long you are called back again making the walk back up here. Some of you are going to be worn out walking back and forth up here. I am trying to keep you from having to make those trips. **You listen to me!!!**

We are at the end of the judgments. Now we are looking at some closure.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

Revelation

21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Beth: “No more sea” is no more church?

V: That is right, there is no one left but the people of God who inherit the earth. There is no sea now; just the earth because there is no one but saved people on earth. The earth, then, is being redeemed.

The New Jerusalem

Revelation

21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God.

21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; . . .

Now that is you, folks. You are going to be here slobbering around just like me. We are all going to be weeping and carrying on, making puddles and mud down here. Some of us will still be trembling so badly we cannot even stand up, just falling down with our faces down in the mud at that point, and God is going to come up and lift you up, and the healing touch of God is going to go slam

through you. You are going to feel the healing love of God and the holiness that comes from His touch. He is going to hold you close. He is going to be your God, and you are going to be His child. He is going to wipe the tears from your eyes. You do not deserve this grace and mercy. None of us deserve it.

Our Tears and Memory Wiped Away

Revelation

21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

You wonder how you can enjoy heaven when you have cast your children into the lake of fire, your parents into the lake of fire, your uncles, your aunts, your cousins, your brothers and sisters, and even your own spouse. You have been casting them into the lake of fire. You are weeping, and you are in agony, and the Lord God Himself comes and gives you healing and comfort and wipes away your tears. You think, “How can I enjoy heaven when I know my children are in that terrible place?” This is the miracle that you and I do not deserve! God is going to wipe away your memory. You will not even remember them. They will remember you forever. They are going to curse your name for eternity. They will never stop cursing your name, but you will not even remember them.

Isaiah

65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

65:18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever [in that] which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

65:19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

He is going to wipe away the memories of these horrible events from your mind, and you will never even think of these former things. They will be gone. There will not be anything left but rejoicing. It is hard for you to hear and understand the grace of God, how far that extends because when I read it now, it is incongruent with what I have just observed about the people being cast into the lake of fire. But through the majesty and miracle of God, He is going to wipe my mind clear, and I am not even going to remember them. However, He is not going to wipe their memories. They are going to be in the fire cursing me, "Why did he not tell me?"

Praise God, this is a miracle for us that is totally undeserved.

Revelation

21:5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

21:6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

We are at the end of chapter 21, and the description here of how the New Jerusalem has come down out of heaven, and there is no temple in it because God and the Lamb are the temple, but in verse 24, there is mention made of nations.

Revelation

21:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: . . .

The nations (*ethnos* in Greek is nations) would be all ethnic groups. You cannot have

just one ethnic group, so it is all the ethnic groups that will be walking in the light of this light that God gives out. And then in the last half of that verse it says,

The City of God

Revelation

21:24 . . . and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

21:26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither [whatsoever] worketh abomination, or [maketh] a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

All of the people who are in the Book of Life can go in and out of the city. Now we saw in the description of the churches there would be some people that would be pillars in the city, and they would stay in the city, and they would not go out of the city.

I think there is going to be some hierarchy in this final arrangement, and on top of that there are going to be those saints who were right here in the line close to the Lord. I think they will be close to the Lord in the city. Those saints way out near the end of the line, I think, are going to be outside of the city running errands all over the place. Those who were idle in this life when they were given a chance and a command from God to do work for Him, they are going to be idle there too for eternity.

Draw close to the Lord while you can. You have one time at bat. Swing that bat. Do not just take a strike without swinging, take another strike, take a third strike, and be called out because that kind of idleness will be reflected in your eternity. You go down swinging. You get out there and minister. Get up when the Lord calls your name in this life. Get on up there! When He calls and

sends you out, you go out. If He tells you to do something, you do it! You have only one try. **Go do it!!!**

Revelation

22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

22:2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, [was there] the tree of life, which bare twelve [manner of] fruits, [and] yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree [were] for the healing of the nations.

Sounds like some of the nations are going to need some healing even here in the eschaton. That indicates the presence of mortal man because, you see, when we talked about the judgment awhile ago, we had the sea giving up the dead which were in it. Those were false Christians. Hell gave up the dead, which were in it. Those were the physically dead people who were sent to hell awaiting their judgment. Then death gave up the dead that were in it. Those were the physically alive but spiritually dead people at the time of the great day of the Lord. Think about it. Could there be anybody alive, physically alive, at that time who are saved? If there were a saved person left, that person would not be executed, could there be mortal man here in heaven? I introduce the question because I believe people will be saved during the millennium, after the rapture. Give it some thought. I would be interested in what you have to say. Here is the final description.

Revelation

22:3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

22:4 And they shall see his face; and his name [shall be] in their foreheads.

22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of

the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

22:6 And he said unto me, These sayings [are] faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed [is] he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Several of you have titled your papers, *Blessed Is He That Heareth And Keepeth The Sayings of this Book*. We all must know that it is no good to just hear it. We must keep it. As we have gone through this semester your accountability has shot through the roof. You know it. Now it is time to do it. If you do not do it, you will not be blessed. A warning to the wise: if you are a wise man, keep the sayings of the prophecy of God's book of Revelation.

Revelation

22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

Here is the closure.

Revelation

22:11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward [is] with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

“Oh, God, please awaken your Church while there is still time. Help us all to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow our Lord, Jesus. I, for one, surrender myself to you. Please take me and use me as You see fit. In Jesus' Name and for His glory, I pray. Amen.”

Chapter Questions

1. Who will reign in the Millennium?
2. Is it personhood or works that is being judged at the Great White Throne?
3. How will religious people appeal their convictions?
4. Who executes the people who have not been warned?
5. Why will you have tears for God to wipe away?

CONCLUSION

Well, dear saint, can you now see the predicament that we are in? I know that you have been tempted to believe that my interpretations of the signs described in this book of Revelation were too negative, morbid, or extreme. They are not.

You may alternatively think that we are not in the tribulation now. You may find great comfort in thinking that the tribulation is yet in the future beyond your own lifetime. My friend these kinds of thoughts are myopic. Look around the world. Dear saints are dying for their faith every day. That is tribulation for them. Denying the occurrence of tribulation because it is not happening to you is tantamount to being the center of the universe in your own thinking.

You may alternatively think that because I cannot name the beginning event for each seal or trumpet, then my interpretation can be discarded. My friend, I can name the beginning event for seal number 1 and trumpet number 6. I can tell you where in the Scriptures the rapture occurs. I can tell you about the millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment. I can give you the hermeneutic for the book of Revelation, I can show you what the key (beyond the hermeneutic) is for understanding the book of Revelation, and I can show you how to receive special blessings from this book.

Are you a disciple? I did not ask whether or not you are a Christian. I am asking a much more poignant question: are you a disciple? If you are not a disciple, you cannot understand and receive the information being sent to you by God in His book of Revelation. To be a disciple requires that you first deny yourself, second that you pick up your cross, and third that you follow Jesus. The Christian masses are not doing these three things. Thus they cannot understand the things that be of God.

So, what are you going to do? My suggestion is that you act upon this information. Act now! Pray this prayer now:

Dear Lord Jesus, I want desperately to be Your disciple. I choose right now to deny myself. I give my life to You, my hopes, my dreams, my job, my family, my money, my time, my network, my spiritual gifts and talents. All that I am and will be, I give to You. No longer do I count living as my life to live. I count it as Your life to live freely through me. Please spend me as one of Your resources to bring glory and honor to Your Name, my Lord Jesus.

I choose right now to pick up my cross. Lord, Your love for me has been proven for eternity because You died such a horrible and undeserved death just to give me life. Your love for me is therefore completely trustworthy. Thus I throw myself into Your Hands. I am Your sacrifice. See, I have my cross. My life and my death are Yours to use as You see fit in Your Great Wisdom.

I choose to follow You, Jesus. Please let me be in yoke with You. Let me bear Your burden. I want to be near to You during this life so that I can enjoy fellowship with You throughout eternity. I will not follow my dreams or aspirations. I will follow You. I will not follow the traditions of men. I will follow You. I will not follow a sinner, a church, a denomination, a pastor, a great teacher, or even expectations placed on me by anyone else. I will follow You, my blessed Lord Jesus.

Lord, please use me and please wake up the Church before it is too late. I can see that the 7th trumpet is about to blow.

Please cause Your people who are called by Your Name (the Church) to humble themselves truly (become slaves), pray real prayers (more than just gimme, gimme, gimme, but *kenotic* prayers), seek Your real Face (not their Santa-Claus-thinking of You), and turn from their wicked ways (carnal worship and living) so that the last trumpet can be delayed because of Your wonderful healing to be bestowed upon our land. Please use me Lord to bless others. Please give me teachers to equip me with the tools to use in worshipful living and ministry. Please count me as Your slave to do Your bidding. I love You, Jesus.

I pray all of these things in the Precious Name of Jesus Christ, my Lord, my Savior, my Master, and my God. Amen!

If you prayed this prayer, just say “amen” out loud and sign your name on one of the available lines.

Now, please re-read and study this book. Then, dear saint, please pass it on to a loved one to read and study.

Please sign below to indicate that you have committed yourself into Jesus’ Hands to use as He sees fit and then pass this book on to others who may also make the same commitment by signing below:

A word of caution: If you prayed this prayer above, there must be changes in your life. However, those changes require your willing consent and active pursuits. If these two things do not follow in your life, then do not expect to be blessed for eternity by the Lord Whom you refused to bless in your short time on earth.

Answers to Chapter Questions

Chapter 1

1. Describe the importance of the word slave.

To be a slave of the Lord means that He tells you what to do, and you do it. It is not what you do on your own, and you hope that it pleases Him. A slave has no way to do his own thing. The slave owner uses a slave. Jesus is the slave owner. You have been purchased as a slave.

2. What is the hierarchy of revelation for the book of Revelation?

See Chart 1.2.

Verbal description of the hierarchy: God gave the revelation to Jesus who passed it to the angel. The angel signed it to John and John described the signs to the churches (servants/slaves).

3. What are signs, and how are they used in Revelation?

They are descriptions of picture signs that are given for us to interpret through our signs hermeneutic to understand the meaning of that sign. They are not to be considered literal.

4. What does the number seven mean in Revelation?

Seven has a universal meaning. Whereas ten is temporal, until the end of *chronos* time, seven is universal through eternity.

5. Describe the orientation of priests, prophets and kings.

A king exercises rule over things; he is a steward. A priest brings the petitions of the people to the ruler (God). A prophet delivers a message from God to the people.

Chapter 2

1. Explain how Jesus is seen after the church is seen?

When the world looks at you, they see you first, and then they see Who is walking among you. That is the Lord among them. Because

they are gathered there in the Lord's name, there He is among them.

2. Describe the hermeneutic, and under it, what are the stars and the candlesticks?

The hermeneutic is that stars are angels and candlesticks are churches.

3. Describe the Lord's appearance to John.

A white-headed man whose eyes burned like fire, a fire that lights, consumes, evaluates, and does the purification. His feet are like burnished bronze.

4. What is the relationship between fear and faith?

"Fear not" is a volitional thing. Fearing when you see with your eyes, fearing when you hear with your ears, fearing when you feel with the touch are all spontaneous. When you have experienced threats through your senses, fear can just well up in you. It is involuntary because it comes with the senses.

Fear is the enemy of faith. With the eyes of faith, you can look beyond the cross to the eternal. Then you will not fear the temporal because the exaltation has to come through the gateway of the cross. That is the rational overcoming of your fear that can erupt in you involuntarily. But you must bring that fear under your will and reason and seal it with your faith. That has to be done by observing Jesus.

5. Who was Polycarp and how did he die?

He was the bishop at Smyrna. He was the disciple of the Apostle John at Ephesus, and later became the bishop at Smyrna. He was burned at the stake without being bound. He was martyred, and his martyrdom was willing. He is a good example of a Christian who walked the kenotic walk. He died because he would not recant his faith in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 3

On separate paper draw a chart for each of the five churches discussed in this chapter. A form is

given for you to follow. Be sure to include all the items in each block including the bottom block. Draw arrows from the elements to the descriptive words in the bottom block.

1. For Smyrna, see Chart 3.1.
2. For Pergamos, see Chart 3.5.
3. For Thyatira, see Chart 3.6.
4. For Sardis, see Chart 3.8.
5. For Philadelphia, see Chart 3.12.

Chapter 4

1. Draw the chart for Laodicea.
See Chart 4.1.
2. What does it take to buy clothes?
Worthy works. Buying of clothes takes works born out of sacrificial faith.
3. Describe the wake-up call.
Chosen to carry the discipleship message, we must hammer, hammer, and hammer even though threatened with death or imprisonment.
4. What does it take to buy eye salve?
To do what you know to do. John 7:17 says "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." Doing brings discernment.
5. Why is the promise to the Laodicean overcomers so great?
The Laodicean Church is a wealthy, comfortable church. Those who are comfortable with numerous blessings are doing no work. Someone in the Laodicean church who does the self-denying, self-sacrificing work will be held up to ridicule and sneering by the comfortable ones. They may even risk being killed because they are doing the will of God. Because they overcome, their rewards will be great.
6. What is the crystal sea?
The refined and glorified church
7. What are the seven lamps?
The Holy Spirit which gives you illumination.

Chapter 5

1. Duplicate the Seal Chart from memory. Describe each seal.
See Chart 5.9

Chapter 6

1. Describe Seals #6 and #7.
Seal #6: Earthquake, stars fell, heaven departed. The sun is a sign of justice and truth, and the darkening means there is a lessening of justice and truth. The moon is a reflection of the sun, and that means that Christians are dimming their reflection of truth and justice. Since stars are angels, they are angels fallen out of heaven which is when Lucifer (Satan) was kicked out of heaven and took with him one third of the angels. Heaven departing as a scroll means there is a separation between heaven and earth
Seal #7: Seven trumpets. All restraints (previous seals) are broken; the restraints are no longer there. The trumpets are to announce a message. The trumpets blow to warn mankind of impending disasters if they will not repent.
2. Differentiate God's actions when moving from seals to trumpets.
God is no longer restraining man; he has loosed all the restraints, and He is now in a warning stage.
3. Describe the 144,000.
These are converted Jews. Each of the 12 tribes has 12,000 Jews who are witnessing for God. They are under a specific protection that is not described, but the seal on their foreheads protect them from the Antichrist. The Antichrist cannot touch them. The people who accept Christ from their witness will immediately be killed.
4. Describe the martyrs.
The martyrs come out of the great tribulation and have washed their clothes. They have given their life for their Lord. They have clothes of white that gives them special status, and they have palms in their hands.

5. Describe the 3 methods of saints bypassing, coming out of, or going through tribulation.

One concept of tribulation is that you bypass it. You see it in front of you, but you avoid it. Many Christians believe that they are going to escape tribulation because the rapture will pull them out before it occurs. The second method is that a saint is in tribulation, but escapes through death. The third method is that a saint passes all the way through tribulation and comes out on the other side.

6. Describe the first 3 trumpets.

Trumpet #1 is economics. One third of the economic systems (trees) will disappear. The economy of the little people (grass) will be burned up. By judgment time there will be economic chaos.

Trumpet #2 is institutionalism. This time it is the sea (religion) that is affected. The great mountain is institutionalism, which lands in the church and causes it to become a great institution to be idolized. One third of the people in the church are going to die spiritually.

Trumpet #3 is false preaching. The star falls upon the rivers and fountains (fresh water) that are the clergy. A third part of the clergy becomes wormwood, and people will die because they are made bitter through preaching without a call to repentance.

Chapter 7

1. List and describe the trumpets.
See Chart 7.2.
2. What are the three woes?
Trumpets #5 (abortion, suicide and Euthanasia), #6 (war), and #7 (rapture).
3. Describe the cost of discipleship.
Forsaking all, picking up your cross, and following Jesus.
4. What is the Little Book, and what does it mean?
The Gospel is sweet in the mouth (justification), but bitter in the stomach (discipleship).

Chapter 8

1. Discuss measuring the temple.
That is measuring the worshippers in the temple against the measuring rod, which is the Canon or Bible. Those who are not truly worshipping are not measured.
2. Identify the two witnesses.
Two churches, Smyrna and Philadelphia.
3. What is the fire from the mouths of the two witnesses.
The words spoken by the witnesses who are really churches. Just as the sword is the Words spoken by Jesus.
4. When is the rapture?
After the sixth trumpet and at the last trump.
5. Identify the woman.
Israel.
6. Identify the child.
Jesus, the Savior.
7. Identify the dragon.
Satan.
8. What is the flood of water?
Islam.
9. Identify the Beast from the sea.
Antichrist.
10. What are heads and horns?
Heads are nations; horns are heads of nations.
11. What is the measuring rod of the temple?
Canon/Bible.
12. Those people who have a semblance of Christianity are in truth _____.
Hypocrites.
13. In Revelation 11, the two witnesses are churches because they are called _____.
Candlesticks.
14. The flames that come out of the mouth of the two witnesses refers to _____

just as the “two-edged sword” refers to the words that come from the Lord.

The words spoken by the witnesses.

15. Explain the meaning of Revelation 11:6: “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will” as it applies to the Christian.

The witnesses can preach God’s Word as a refreshing rain, or they can announce plagues, or they can disclose traditions of men and false religions as putrid blood.

Chapter 9

1. The rapture will occur (choose one)
d. at Trumpet #7.
2. The person in charge of education and journalism will be (choose one)
a. the false prophet.
3. What is escapism thinking?
We will be raptured before enduring any tribulation.
4. Who is the Beast of the Earth?
The False Prophet.
5. Explain the spiritual mark of the beast.
To affirm intellectually political correctness (spiritual mark on the forehead); to act on political correctness (spiritual mark on the hand).
6. Describe the 144,000.
These are the Jewish saints who are completely loose from the world and its concerns (a full-blown *kenosis*).

Chapter 10

1. What is the spiritual mark?
Political correctness.
2. Describe the patience of the saints.
Keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

3. Who is reaped by the angel’s sickle?
Unbelievers are reaped to God’s wrath by the angel’s sickle.
4. What is the sea of glass?
The perfect, glorified church.
5. Describe the first six vials.
Vial #
 - (1) Grievous sores: Diseases pertaining to political correctness.
 - (2) Sea became dead man’s blood: Spiritual death of everyone in the apostate church.
 - (3) Rivers and springs became blood: Spiritual death of all clergy.
 - (4) Scorching fire from sun: Truth and justice is recognized by Antichrist’s followers but not accepted.
 - (5) Darkness over kingdom: Truth and justice are kept inverted by Antichrist.
 - (6) Drying up of Euphrates River: Big tent theology adopted by Islam, which allows it to join with other religions.

Chapter 11

1. What is the great city?
Babylon (the world system of the upside-down *kenosis*).
2. Who is riding on the beast?
The harlot (the apostate, institutional church).
3. Describe Vial #7.
Earthquake (dividing the great city into three parts).
4. Describe the scarlet beast.
Great dragon (Satan) with seven heads (all nations) and ten horns (all kings of the nations).
5. Describe Mystery Babylon.
Name written on the harlot church’s head because she has adopted the Babylonian world system.
6. Who is the mother of harlots?
The harlot church
7. What are heads? Mountains?

Heads are nations. Mountains are institutions.

8. If there are seven heads on the beast, how can Satan be one of them and the eighth as well?

Satan exists outside of the seven nations and their kings, but he will also be incarnated as the seventh as Antichrist.

9. Interpret the called, chosen, and faithful of Revelation 17:14.

Christians who are **called** out of the world end up in the apostate and institutional church of Antichrist. Those Christians who are **called** out of the apostate church and become real disciples are **chosen** by God to do His work. These who do God's work at great cost, even unto death, are the **faithful**.

10. How does Jeremiah's speckled bird analogy apply to the church?

The church of Antichrist will be identified with Babylon, but there will still be the distinction of "church." This distinction will cause the kings of the nations to turn on her and destroy her. This follows the speckled bird analogy in which the other birds turn on the one that is different and peck it to death.

11. How does the church merchandise in men's souls?

When you use religion to get what you want. God wants to spend His resources for His own purposes (definition of holiness). Pastors, churches, and denominational agencies mer-

chandise in men's souls when they trade the spiritual well being of church members for material goods or political power.

Chapter 12

1. Who will reign in the Millennium?

The Lord and His real disciples.

2. Is it personhood or works that is being judged at the Great White Throne?

Works.

3. How will religious people appeal their convictions?

The religious unsaved will remind the Lord of what they have done for Him.

4. Who executes the people who have not been warned?

The Christians who have not been faithful watchmen, and who have neglected to fulfill the responsibility to warn the ones they have been in contact with.

5. Why will you have tears for God to wipe away?

You will see all those people to whom you did not testify be condemned to the lake of fire, and some of those may be your loved ones. You may even have to throw them into the lake of fire because of your failure to be a proper watchman.

GLOSSARY

- Apocalypsis—means “an unveiling of something unknowable otherwise by man, and it comes from above.
- Apocalyptic literature—a name that has been given to non-canonical Jewish writings that have an expectation of some kind of deliverer who will be political in nature.
- Antichrist—beast from the sea.
- Babylon—the world system
- Banished—to exile somebody from a place, or send somebody to another place officially as a punishment. To forbid or expel something, or put it out of your mind.
- Beautiful feet—the feet of a messenger who takes the message of hope to the people.
- Candlesticks—churches
- Canonical—relating or belonging to the biblical canon. A canon is Greek for reed, a measuring stick. To be canonical is to measure up to the reed.
- Chronos*—linear time that is past, present, and future.
- Cities—systems. The great city would be the world system which is exemplified by Babylon. The world system is divided into three parts: economics, religion, and government.
- Clothes—come with works. To be clothed in heaven means you must do works here on earth.
- Commendation—praise of somebody’s abilities.
- Crown of Glory—being a faithful leader of the church. That means you have to go against the tide. If you will do that, you will receive the crown of glory.
- Crown of Righteousness—the crown for the person who has been righteous in his behavior straight through, and he does not fear the Lord’s coming.
- Crown of Rejoicing—the promise here is leading others into righteousness. You will rejoice forever.
- Crystal sea—the refined and glorified church.
- Deterministic—relating to the doctrine or belief that everything including every human act, is caused by something and that there is no real free will. Having an outcome that can be predicted because all of its causes are either known or the same as those of a previous event.
- Deuteronomic theology—declares that the better you are the more blessings you will have, and these blessings are interpreted materially.
- Doulos*—Greek word for slave/servant.
- Dragon—Satan. Satan has seven heads which are seven nations.
- Earthquake—disruptions in the World’s (manmade) systems.
- Ecclesia—to be called out of. The Greek word for church.
- Ecstasy—a feeling of intense delight. A mental state, usually caused by intense religious experience, sexual pleasure, or drugs, in which somebody is so dominated by an emotion that self-control and sometimes consciousness are lost (you are outside of yourself’s control). From two words *ek* and *stasis* which mean to stand out of.
- Entendre—an intentional meaning. Double entendre—both literal and sign interpretations are valid.
- Euphrates River, drying up of—river is fresh water, which is clergy, so the drying up of it from the East means the clerical or preaching of Islam is going to dry up enough to allow Islam to join all the other religions to come against the real people of Christ.
- Exemplary—so good or admirable that others would do well to copy it. Serving as an illustration or example.
- Exhortation—something said or written in order to urge somebody strongly to do something. The giving of earnest advice or encouragement.
- Eye salve—faithfulness to do the Truth that you know. Faithfulness gives discernment so that you can see.
- False Prophet—beast out of the earth.
- Fornicators—sexual intercourse between two consenting adults, who are not married to each other. In the Bible sexual intercourse between a man and a woman who are not married, or any form of sexual behavior is considered to be immoral. Spiritually, Christians who bring in Jezebel, develop a relationship with her, and produce children that have no hope of salvation because of the false doctrine taught by Jezebel and the fornicators. Jezebel and the fornicators may be saved, but the

- people who come into the church accepting the false doctrine will not be saved.
- Four beasts—man has to do with government, calf has to do with economics, the lion has to do with war, and the eagle has to do with death. Correlates with four horsemen.
- Four winds—winds of doctrine.
- Fresh waters (the rivers)—the clergy and leaders of the church.
- Frogs—amphibians. Amphibians are at home on earth and in water. Frogs are the demonic influences with the same message in the earth and in the church.
- Gay—homosexual in sexual orientation.
- Genre—one of the categories that an archetype can be subdivided into. For example, the basis of form, style, or subject matter can be used to subdivide fiction, i.e., detective novels are a genre of fiction. Thus, a cataclysmic event described in the book of Revelation can be subcategorized as prophecy or drama.
- Glorification—the reaching heaven by the Christian and the receiving of rewards and assignments by God. It is the third part of salvation. The first two parts are justification and sanctification.
- Glory, marks of—the Lord's wounds from His service.
- Gnostics—relating to knowledge, especially knowledge of spiritual truths. To the Gnostic knowledge is salvific.
- Golden vials full of odours—prayers of the saints.
- Harlot—the apostate church. A harlot is a person who has a relationship with someone to whom he/she does not belong. A person who belongs to Satan has a relationship with him, but since that person belongs to Satan, that is not harlotry. Spiritually, an unsaved person, then, cannot be a harlot because God will not have an illicit relationship. A harlot then is someone belonging to God but having a relationship with or serving Satan. The harlot is sitting on many waters means that she is from many religions since water is religion. Waters (plural) signify the mixing of various religions.
- Harp—when mentioned in the Bible, harping means that God acts through His people in harmony. We come together, and we hear the voice of many waters and act in harmony to bring the whole trust, not in chaos or self or private interpretation, but in harmony with God.
- Hermeneutical—relating to or consisting in the interpretation of texts, especially the books of the Bible. Serving to interpret or explain something. The science and methodology of interpreting texts, especially the books of the Bible. The branch of theology that is concerned with explaining or interpreting religious concepts, theories, and principles.
- Holy—means to be set aside for God's use. For people it includes righteous morality also.
- Hostile—showing or feeling hatred, enmity, antagonism, or anger toward somebody. Strongly opposed to somebody or something. Relating to, characteristic of, or belonging to an enemy, especially in warfare.
- Hybrid—Something made up of a mixture of different elements.
- Ichabod—God removes His Spirit from the church (not from individuals). God removes His Spirit from “among” them.
- Jezebel—a Christian who brings in false doctrine.
- Illumination—the provision of light to make something visible or bright, or the fact of being lit up. The process of clarifying or explaining something. Intellectual or spiritual enlightenment. In hermeneutics it gives understanding of God's conviction to the hearers. It comes from the Holy Spirit.
- Incorruptible crown—to those who can bring themselves under control. When you can say “No” to yourself, and when you can make yourself go where you do not want to go.
- Involuntary—required or exacted against somebody's will or wishes. Spontaneous or automatic, and not controlled or controllable by the mind.
- Islands—institutions, i.e. church denominations, mission boards, seminaries, colleges, annuity boards, etc.
- Justification—in biblical terms, the new birth. The Christian belief that people are absolved from all sin if they believe in Jesus Christ.
- Kairos—vertical time in which God intersects *chronos*.
- Kenosis—to empty oneself.
- King—the office which exercises rule.
- Law of the harvest—what you sow, you will reap.
- Lawlessness—not obedient to law or having no codified law at all.

Lesbians—sexual attraction and sexual relations between women.

Linear in scope (concerning time)—the past, the present, and the future

Many waters—not just Christianity, but a lot of different kinds of religions.

Martyr—the Greek word for witness.

Meekness—yielding your life to the Holy Spirit.

Missio Dei—mission of God.

Moon turning to blood—just as blood coagulates and putrefies when it ceases to circulate, this occurs when Christians become sluggish in their witness. The moon reflects the sun, and when the sun does not shine, the moon does not reflect.

Moral—you do not do the “thou shalt nots,” but you do the “thou shalts.” Relating to issues of right and wrong and to how individuals should behave. Able to distinguish right from wrong and to make decisions based on that knowledge.

Morning Star—Jesus.

Mountains—institutions such as banks and governmental agencies.

Nicolaitanism—hierarchicalism in the church. Clericalism. The doctrine of Nicolaitanism is where you have the clergy above the laity, and the clergy telling the laity what to do. “Nico” means fight or conquer, and “laitans” means the laity.

Oil and wine—oil is grace, wine is Gospel.

Ontological (Ontology)—the most general branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature of being.

Patience—from the Greek word *hupomeno* that means to abide under (*hupo* = under, and *meno* = abide).

Perceived—To notice something, especially something that escapes the notice of others. To understand something in a particular way.

Perfection—comes from the Greek word *telos*. It means also “end point.” Thus to be perfect means that you reach the end. Heaven is our end point. Therefore, we will be perfect in heaven. However, the perfection of one does not make one equal with another. For example, if you have a 40-watt light bulb, and a 100-watt light bulb, both of them are perfect, but when you turn them on, the 100-watt light bulb is brighter.

Persevere—To persist steadily in an action or belief, usually over a long period and especially despite problems or difficulties.

Perverted—deviating greatly from what is accepted as right, normal, or proper. Relating to or practicing sexual activities considered abnormal (disapproving). Misinterpreted or distorted.

Predestined—to decide in advance what is going to happen. To select in advance who will go to heaven after death and who will not.

Preterist—dealing with prior history. Concerning the book of Revelation, all events described in it would be prior to our times, i.e. dealing with the contemporaries of John.

Priest—the office which brings the petitions of the people to the ruler.

Profit prophet—a person who does his prophecy for gain, a mercenary approach to ministry. For example, Balaam who enticed Israel to stumble.

Prophet—the office which relays God’s message to the people.

Puros—in Greek *puros* is fire. *Puros* is to purify, and also *puros* gives light for understanding.

Rapture—movement of the saints to Glory at the last trumpet

Rational—Governed by, or showing evidence of, clear and sensible thinking and judgment, based on reason rather than emotion or prejudice.

Reprimand—to rebuke somebody for a wrongdoing. A rebuke given for having done something wrong.

Restrainer—the law.

Revelation—something that comes from God to man, and it is a revelation of something that we could not know without God’s help.

Sanctification—the verbal of holiness. It means to be made holy. Holiness means to be set aside for God’s use.

Sea—Christian religion and its people.

Sea of glass—the perfect, glorified church

Seals (seven)—God’s restraints against which people push until a seal is opened (removed) so that the people can do as they wish. Seals are not causative.

Seven—a number that has more than just a numerical value. It has a universal value. For example, the seven Spirits would be the Holy Spirit.

Seven churches of God—the whole church.

Seven eyes—absolute and total knowledge and understanding and comprehension

Seven horns—horns indicate power; horns are people who are bearing power. The seven horns indicate absolute, total power.

Seven horns and seven eyes—omnipotence and omniscience put together. These two indicate the Holy Spirit because they are the seven Spirits. Seven indicates wholeness, completeness, and eternal.

Seven Spirits of God—the Holy Spirit.

Seven stars—all of the angels.

Shipmasters—pastors

Ships—local churches

Six, six, six—being man, man, man; we have man controlled economics, man-centered Gospel, and man for his government.

Slave of the Lord—the Lord tells you what to do, and you do it. A slave has no way to do his own thing.

Speckled bird—a bird like other birds, but having something different. The other birds will attack and destroy that bird if possible. The apostate church will eventually be destroyed when her usefulness to Satan is over because of having the name church. It is the speckled-bird analogy.

Spontaneous—resulting from internal or natural processes, with no apparent external influence. Arising from natural impulse or inclination, rather than from planning or in response to suggestions from others. Naturally unrestrained or uninhibited. Growing without cultivation.

Stars—angels

Stars fall to earth—stars are angels, and when Satan and his angels were kicked out of heaven, they fell to earth.

Stupor—an acute lack of mental alertness brought on, for example, by shock or lack of sleep. A state of

near unconsciousness induced by, for example, drugs or alcohol.

Sun darkening—truth and justice are darkening. People have difficulty making wise decisions.

Talking image—television.

Temporal—of this life as opposed to eternal.

Ten days—a temporal whole. It will end upon death. It does not move into eternity.

Transcend—to go beyond a limit or range, for example of thought or belief. To go beyond something in quality or achievement. For example, God's love transcends the gap between man's sin and God's holiness.

Transcendent—to be set aside for the Lord's purpose.

Trumpets (seven)—calls for repentance. A trumpet calls for attention, and the desired action, as people see the condition the world is in, is that they will change or reverse their direction.

Two-edged sword—Word of God (Law and Gospel).

Vials—God's wrath poured out on Antichrist and his kingdom.

Volitional—the act of exercising the will. The ability to make conscious choices or decisions.

Water—religion (the religious people).

Water coming from Satan—a false religion.

White stone—the Christians who are worthy receive manna and a white stone, and in the stone a new name is written. The new name on the white stone is a special intimacy between God and the worthy person.

Wormwood—false prophecy. God is going to be pointing His hostility and anger and retribution upon the clergy.

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THE SEVEN SEALS AND TRUMPETS

Seal #1	White horse → Saul → Government → Antichrist	JUDGMENT
Seal #2	Red horse → War, weapons, mass destruction	
Seal #3	Black horse → Economics	
Seal #4	Pale horse → Death	
Seal #5	Persecution of the Saints	
Seal #6	Earthquake, stars fall, heaven departed	
Seal #7	Trumpet #1 → Trumpet #2 → Trumpet #3 → Trumpet #4 → Trumpet #5 → Trumpet #6 → Trumpet #7 →	

REVELATION 1:1

GOD	→ Revelation
Jesus	→ Revelation
Angel	→ Signify (used signs)
John	→ Describes signs
Churches (Servants/Slaves)	→ Persecution: Luke 21:12
Revelation	→ Patience of the Saints

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